

# Rolling Stone

Issue 1089  
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## U2 LIVE FROM OUTER SPACE

Inside the  
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Rock Show  
Ever

**MATT TAIBBI**  
**WALL STREET'S**  
**NAKED**  
**SWINDLE**







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# RS1089

## "All the News That Fits"

### THIS NOTE'S FOR YOU

Young at the Tower  
Theater in Upper  
Darby, Pennsylvania,  
December 2007.



## Young Unpacks His Trunk

**T**OWARD THE END OF NEIL YOUNG'S 2007 THEATER tour, Oscar-winning director Jonathan Demme brought along a small camera crew to document the intimate shows. The film – *Neil Young Trunk Show*, which played September 14th at the Toronto International Film Festival – captures two stellar gigs at Philly's Tower Theater. Young mixes hits like "Cinnamon Girl" and "The Loner" with super-obscurities such as "Kansas" and

"Mexico," two songs from Young's unreleased 1975 album *Homegrown*. The movie culminates with a 20-minute rendition of "No Hidden Path," from 2007's *Chrome Dreams II*. "Four minutes into it, I started seeing some walkouts," says Demme. "By the end, I counted 40 walkouts, but it got a standing ovation from the 1,860 people that didn't walk out. . . . The film isn't great. The film is just a film. He's great. The film wants to become one with him."

### COVER STORY

## U2 Live From Outer Space

As U2's massive rock show – featuring a four-clawed sci-fi cathedral – hits the States, the biggest band in the world seeks to prove it's also the best. *By Brian Hiatt* ..... 38

### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

## Wall Street's Naked Swindle

A scheme to sell fake stocks helped kill Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers – exposing the counterfeit nature of our entire economy. *By Matt Taibbi* ..... 50

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## Miranda Lambert, Redneck Diva

Country music's toughest – and hottest – chick channels Fox News and Dolly Parton on her rootsy, rocking *Revolution*. *By Melissa Maerz* ..... 48

### FEATURE

## James Ellroy's Apocalypse

He calls himself the "Demon Dog" of American fiction. And he nearly lost his mind finishing his masterwork, a secret history of the 1960s. *By Sean Woods* ..... 60



## ROCK & ROLL

### Muse Take America

British prog-rock trio – and U2's tour openers – finally find U.S. success. **PLUS:** Inside the new *Twilight* soundtrack .....13

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After splitting with her man and her band, Jones crafts LP of heartbreak anthems.....20

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### On the Cover

U2: Bono and the Edge photographed on August 13th, 2009, in the living room of their villa in Eze, France.

**Photograph by Sam Jones**

Digital imaging and logo treatment by Splashlight

# rollingstone.com



## The Essential U2: From 'Boy' to 'No Line'

ROLLING STONE's guide to U2's best recordings and a photo gallery tracing the rockers' path to megastardom. **PLUS:** Exclusive video from the U2360° Tour kickoff of the U.S. leg in Chicago, and a report from opening night. [rollingstone.com/issue1089](http://rollingstone.com/issue1089)

## Q&A

### James Ellroy

The modern-noir master – whose new novel, *Blood's a Rover*, stars right-wingers on a quest for redemption – on why fiction should be vulgar and why he's not a fan of Raymond Chandler. [rollingstone.com/issue1089](http://rollingstone.com/issue1089)

## VIDEO

### 'Off the Cuff With Peter Travers'

*The Office's* John Krasinski stops by our office to discuss his screen adaptation of David Foster Wallace's *Brief Interviews With Hideous Men*. [rollingstone.com/issue1089](http://rollingstone.com/issue1089)

## VIDEO

### Miranda Lambert's 'Revolution'

Country's gun-toting hottie talks about her new album and her love of Merle Haggard. [rollingstone.com/issue1089](http://rollingstone.com/issue1089)



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## BLOGS

### Classic Rock Photos

Legendary rock photographer Jim Marshall tells the stories of his iconic images – and clears up the mystery behind his 1963 picture of Bob Dylan rolling a tire down a New York street. [rollingstone.com/photos](http://rollingstone.com/photos)

### Live at Rolling Stone

Matthew Sweet and Susanna Hoffs duet on Neil Young and Yes tunes – from their covers albums – in our studio. [rollingstone.com/issue1089](http://rollingstone.com/issue1089)

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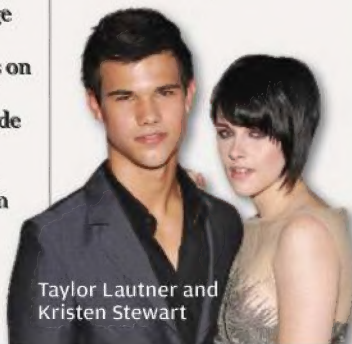
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## SOUNDTRACK

### Behind 'New Moon'

A breakdown of the soundtrack from the latest *Twilight* flick. [rollingstone.com/issue1089](http://rollingstone.com/issue1089)



Taylor Lautner and Kristen Stewart

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Concerts sweepstakes are open to residents of the 50 United States and Washington, D.C., who are 18 years of age or older as of September 30th, 2009. To enter, log on to [Rollingstone.com/rockhallgiveaway](http://Rollingstone.com/rockhallgiveaway) and follow the registration and entering directions. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Sweepstakes begin at 9:00 a.m. EST on September 30th, 2009, and end at 11:59 p.m. EST on October 15th, 2009. Certain restrictions may apply. Complete Official Rules are available at [Rollingstone.com/rockhallgiveaway](http://Rollingstone.com/rockhallgiveaway).





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# Editor's Notes

## Taibbi vs. Wall Street

**T**HERE'S A SCENE IN MICHAEL Moore's new movie, *Capitalism: A Love Story*, in which he makes fun of Wall Street traders and Harvard economists who can't explain what a credit-default swap is. They stumble, they stammer, they say things like, "Wait a minute – let me start over." It turns out that the complex financial instruments Wall Street has used to bilk investors of billions, imploding the global economy in the process, are just too damn complicated to comprehend, even for the experts. It's a funny and revealing bit – and it underscores, in dramatic fashion, why we should all be grateful to Matt Taibbi.

In two major pieces in *ROLLING STONE* – first on AIG [RS 1075], then on Goldman Sachs [RS 1083] – Matt has laid bare the inner workings of Wall Street, using language we can all understand, even if we wouldn't want to repeat it to our grandmother. He has walked us through credit-default swaps and collateralized debt obligations and the intricacies of oil commodities, exposing precisely how the scam was run. In this issue, he returns to the moment it all started – last year's sudden and catastrophic collapse of Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers – and illuminates the vast counterfeiting scheme that now pervades our entire economy ["Wall Street's Naked Swindle," page 50]. The result is a devastating portrait of a bankrupt system, and the key players who twisted the rules to enrich themselves while impoverishing millions.

Growing up in Boston, the last thing Matt wanted to be was a journalist. For starters, his dad was in the business, and Matt was determined to stake out an identity of his own. Plus the limits of mainstream reporting didn't appeal to him: everything presented in that carefully neutral voice, so authoritative and boring and fake. So in the time-honored tradition of kids eager to make their own way in the world, Matt fled the country in search of cheaper drugs.

But how to pay for those drugs? With no employable skills, Matt got a job as sports editor at *The Moscow Times*, then

tried playing pro basketball in Mongolia. Nothing seemed to click, though, until he started his own newspaper, *the eXile*, and began exposing the corruption and hypocrisy of post-Soviet Russia. "Growing up, I was a big fan of *Spy* magazine," he says. "I wanted our paper to be like that, only grosser." His preferred method of exposé was the prank: At one point he approached Mikhail Gorbachev and offered him a job as "perestroika coordinator" for the New York Jets. "They were ripe for that stuff," he says, his glee still evident a decade later. "They had no tradition of practical jokes."

His experience in Russia served him well when he came to RS in 2004 and turned his attention to American-style corruption. "The Russians are crude, low-

rent operators compared to us," he says. "One of their oligarchs actually robbed a train loaded with oil. Ours do the same stuff in the trillions, and it all looks legit." Last year his work at RS earned a National Magazine Award, the profession's highest honor.

Not surprisingly, Matt's thorough reporting and dead-on analysis have provoked howls of outrage from Wall Street. Nothing is more threatening to a con artist, after

all, than the well-informed smartass who shows everyone exactly how the con works. What *is* surprising is how many financial journalists – the very people who were supposed to alert us to the wholesale fraud on Wall Street – have joined in the attacks. Unable to impeach the accuracy of Matt's work, some have taken to dismissing his savagely funny tone. "For the record," former *Wall Street Journal* staffer Heidi Moore sniffed, "I don't think any article that contains the line 'vampire squid sucking the face of humanity' is real journalism."

It would be hard to find a single line that better evokes the cluelessness and incompetence of America's financial press. And for the record, it's a "great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity." If you can't explain collateralized debt obligations, at least get your quotes about gelatinous sea creatures right.

—ERIC BATES, *Executive Editor*



**BULLISH** "Wall Street's scams are as crazy as anything you find in Russia."

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justintimberlake.com

A black and white photograph of Justin Timberlake in a control room. He is wearing a white dress shirt and a dark vest, holding a telephone receiver to his ear. In the background, there is a laptop and a mixing console. The overall mood is professional and sophisticated.

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A clear glass bottle of Givenchy Play fragrance. The bottle has a rectangular shape with rounded edges. The label features the word "GIVENCHY" at the top, followed by "RWD", "PLAY" (with a red play button icon), and "FFWD".

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# Correspondence

## { Love Letters & Advice }



### Joys of Colbert

THANKS FOR THE INFORMATIVE and humorous story on "The Subversive Joy of Stephen Colbert" [RS 1087]. He is far and away the funniest talk-show host on television. Neil Strauss did a fantastic job of bringing an American icon to life.

*Mike Phillips, via the Internet*

I HAVE BEEN A HUGE COLBERT fan for years, and it was really nice to learn the roots of his humor.

*Stephen Kirby, Kenosha, WI*

THE COLBERT COVER PLAYING off the depressing state of our economy really hit the spot. This was the best issue in months.

*Howard Jay Meyer, Brooklyn*

**"Your eloquent tribute to Ted Kennedy was far better than anything I read anywhere else."**

THE UNFUNNIEST MAN ON TV gets another cover and an insomnia-curing interview. What's the appeal of this guy?

*Bill Sperger, Ithaca, NY*

I WAS THRILLED TO READ your terrific and probing interview with the funniest, quickest-witted "idiot" on TV. This conversation really brought

him home. It's heartwarming to know how much he values his family and the joys of life. He deserves all the accolades.

*Chris Ward  
McMinnville, OR*

GRANTED, COLBERT IS BRILLIANT, but you failed to acknowledge his huge debt to his mentor Jon Stewart.

*Don LaFraniere  
Granada Hills, CA*

### TV's 50 Reasons

YOUR NEIL PATRICK HARRIS article ["50 Reasons to Watch TV," RS 1087] highlights everything I love about showbiz. Who would have thought that straight-edged, acne-ridden Doogie Howser would grow up to be a star, attending parties at the Playboy Mansion with his boyfriend as topless girls dance around him? And they say the American Dream is dead.

*Theodora Norris  
New Rochelle, NY*

NEIL PATRICK HARRIS IS SO awesome, if I could go gay, it would be for NPH.

*Michael George, Chandler, AZ*

NO "SIMPSONS"? NO JON Stewart? You pissed me off enough to finally get me to write a letter, so I guess that

means you're doing your job.

*Robert E. Oppenheimer  
Via the Internet*

TV SUCKS. THE NETWORKS suck. MTV really, really sucks. Your fine publication should be encouraging folks to get a life rather than zoning out to the boob tube.

*Scott Davis, Bellingham, WA*

IT MAKES ME REALLY HAPPY to see that David Duchovny is on the road to recovery from sex addiction. I'm sure his wife is proud of the changes he has made. Your story made it clear that Duchovny has learned selflessness, which came across in his "take one for the team" attitude in regard to "fisting." Way to go, David!

*Tania Cromwell, Denver*

### Pop's Angry Star

GAVIN EDWARDS' "A DARKER Shade of Pink" [RS 1087] offered an unforgettable glimpse into one of pop's most fascinating stars. To hear that Pink was once an acid-tongued teen is a damn triumphant story.

*Joseph Donnelly, Portland, ME*

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR the overdue article on Pink. Why this amazing, funny and talented woman is not recognized more in her home country is just mind-boggling.

*Paula Houlden, Omaha, NE*

I ONCE THOUGHT PINK WAS a mediocre pop singer known for her hair color, but Edwards' article made me think otherwise. She's a complex artist who is finally coming into her own.

*Amanda Lewis, Dallas*

### Hall of Fame

THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR refreshing Q&A with David Crosby [Hall of Fame, RS 1087]. In this age of music prima donnas, Crosby is just a humble man who appreciates his talent and his life.

*Thomas Barkewitz, Seattle*

GREAT Q&A, BUT CROSBY'S suggestion that the Hollies should be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame will have to wait. They have to get in line behind Cat Stevens.

*Michael A. Olivas, Houston*

### Killing Joke

SORRY, BUT THE KILLERS' Brandon Flowers [Q&A, RS 1087] is to rock & roll what Stouffer's mac-'n-cheese is to Italian food.

*Zachary Selwyn, Tucson, AZ*

### The Last Brother

ERIC BATES' ELOQUENT TRIBUTE to Ted Kennedy ["The Last Brother," RS 1087] was far better than anything I read during the time of remembrance.

*C. Douglas Phillips, New York*

TO WRITE THAT KENNEDY "wound up drunk and on a bridge late one night" without mentioning that he left a young woman to die surely makes it less of a wonderful life.

*Kenneth Kunz, Mantua, NJ*

I HAVE NEVER WRITTEN TO a magazine before, but "The Last Brother" was absolutely beautiful.

*Elizabeth Saunders  
Via the Internet*



### Bonnaroo Ahoy

IN YOUR BONNAROO REPORT [RS 1082/83], you mentioned a parrot. This 11-year-old macaw, Valentine, was that bird. This was her seventh Bonnaroo with my son Shannon (above). A grandma can brag about grandchildren and grandchildren.

*Pam Patterson  
Murfreesboro, TN*

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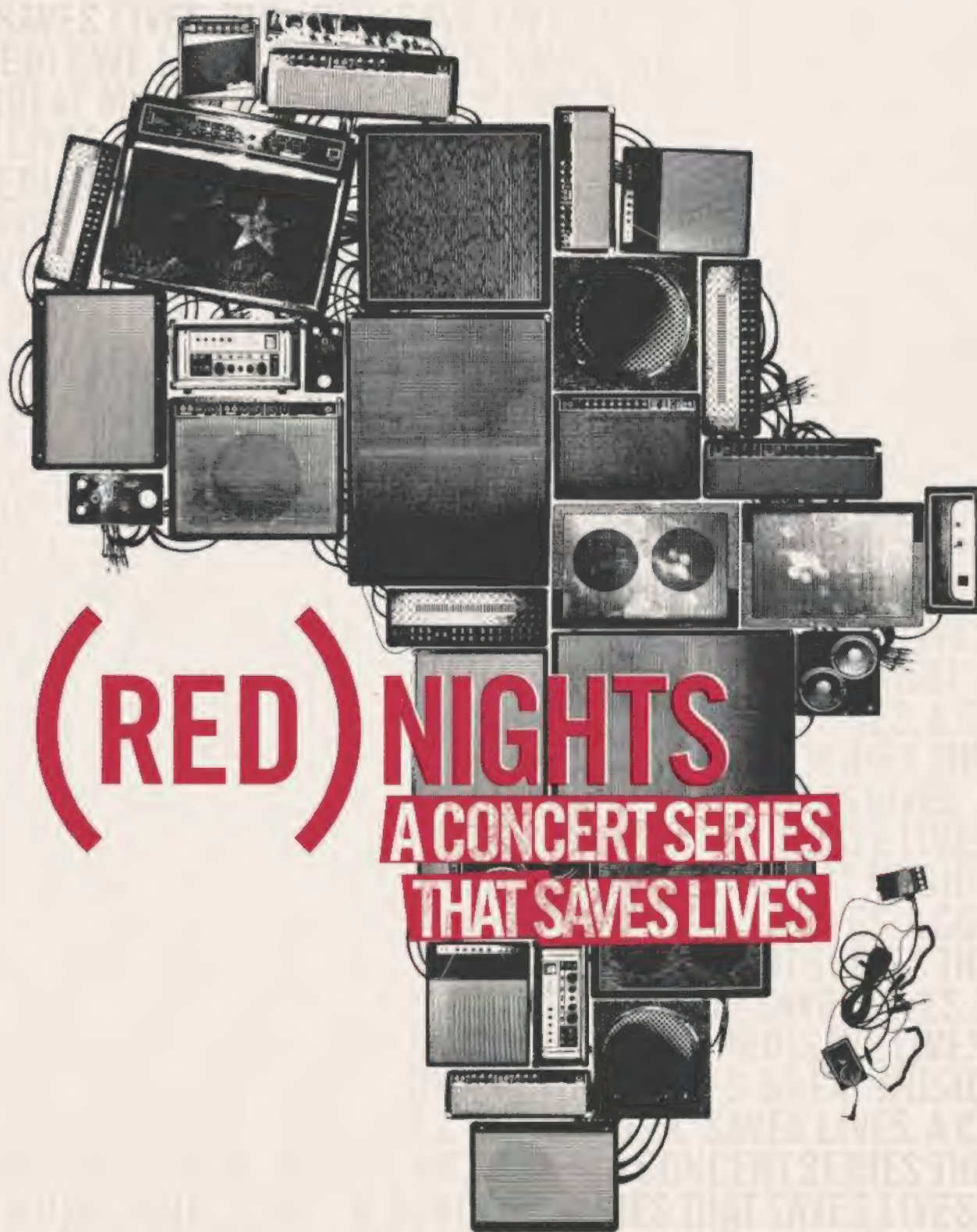
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## NORAH JONES' NEW LP

After splitting with her boyfriend, Jones crafts heartbreak anthems. **Page 20**

## 3OH!3'S VMA BLOWOUT

Emo rappers – and Best New Artist nominees – party in New York. **Page 22**

## Q&A: WAYNE COYNE

The Flaming Lips singer on his punk heroes and sucking at guitar. **Page 28**

# Rock & Roll

## Global Superstars Muse Explode in America

With a Top Five record and stadium gigs with U2, the Brit trio have arrived  
By David Fricke

MATT BELLAMY LOOKS at it this way: "It's a grounding experience," the singer-guitarist-pianist says a few days before his band, the British trio Muse, starts a three-week run opening stadium shows for U2. "It reminds you you're doing well, but not quite as well as them," he adds, laughing, on the phone from his home near Lake Como, in northern Italy.

Actually, Bellamy, 31, is calling from the middle of a mael-

### PROFILE

strom. A week earlier, on September 13th, Bellamy, drummer Dominic Howard and bassist Chris Wolstenholme made their Broadway and U.S. television debuts on the same night. Their performance of "Uprising," the pneumatic-metal single from the group's new album, *The Resistance* – from a gig the band played to a packed house at the Walter Kerr Theatre in New York – was shown during MTV's Video Music Awards broadcast.

Two days later, *The Resistance*, Muse's fifth studio album, was released. Then, on September 23rd at Giants Stadium, Muse played their first set under U2's gargantuan Claw, aptly hitting the stage with "America," from *West Side Story*. By then, *The Resistance* – a whirl of serrated-guitar [Cont. on 18]



**SHOWTIME**  
Bellamy at  
Giants Stadium,  
where Muse  
opened for U2  
in September

## Five New Jackson Songs for Fall

Soundtrack to 'This Is It' film includes hits and unheard tunes  
By Steve Knopper

THE SOUNDTRACK TO the Michael Jackson documentary *This Is It*, due October 27th, will contain at least five previously unreleased songs – including the first single, "This Is It," recorded during the *Dangerous* era, and a spoken-word poem called "Planet Earth." The tracks

### UPDATE

are just the beginning of a flood of unreleased Jackson material Sony Music plans to roll out over the next few years. "We have a lot of music in the vaults," says Rob Stringer, chairman of Jackson's label. "We will take our time with the rest of the material."

The two-disc album hits stores a day before the movie arrives in 14,000 theatres. Sony's Columbia Pictures paid Jackson's estate and promoter AEG Live \$60 million for the film, which is based on rehearsal footage for the superstar's planned run of London shows. Says AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips, "There's never been anything like this for an iconic performer, where you see the man's last work." **PS**



# Bands Battle for Sequel After 'Twilight' Soundtrack Scores

Vampire phenomenon becomes a bright spot in ailing record biz

By Josh Eells

WHEN IT CAME TO *Twilight*, Death Cab for Cutie weren't exactly early adopters. "We were completely in the dark about the whole phenomenon," says guitarist Chris Walla. "I remember my teenage cousins talking about it last Christmas, and I was like, 'Vampires? What?'"

A year later, the music world is paying attention. In addition

## INDUSTRY

to earning nearly \$200 million at the box office and making matinee heartthrobs out of a cast of unknowns, the first film in Stephenie Meyer's vampires-in-love series spawned a hit soundtrack that has sold more than 2.2 million copies.

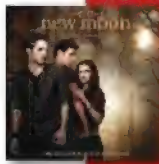
Little surprise, then, that for the sequel, *The Twilight Saga: New Moon*, music supervisor Alexandra Patsavas received "hundreds and hundreds of submissions" from bands jockeying to make the cut. "We got coffins, Dracula pictures, crazy stuff," Patsavas says. "No one showed up in character, but I wouldn't have been surprised."

While the first *Twilight* soundtrack focused on full-throttle rock bands like Linkin Park and Paramore, the new one strikes a more sensitive note. "The second book is quite dark and gloomy," says *New Moon* director Chris Weitz. "We wanted bands that weren't too poppy—that weren't afraid to go somber." In addition to brand-new tracks from heavy hitters such as the Killers and Thom Yorke—whose "Hearing Damage" soundtracks Weitz's favorite musical moment, a frenzied vampire-vs.-werewolf showdown—there are appearances by indie favorites like Bon Iver and Grizzly Bear. (Weitz says of all the groups on their wish list, only two—Kings of Leon and Arcade Fire—said no.)



### 'Twilight' Rocks

The *New Moon* soundtrack includes tunes by Death Cab for Cutie (1) and Thom Yorke (2). The original soundtrack, which featured Paramore (3), has sold more than 2.2 million copies.



For the smaller artists, being included is a godsend. "These days, there are very few outlets to break a new act," says Livia Tortella, general manager of Atlantic Records, which is releasing the soundtrack. "For an artist like Lykke Li to get a song on *New Moon*, it's huge." Muse frontman Matt Bellamy—whose band is featured in both *Twilight* films—agrees. "It's opened us up to a younger audience," he says.

The lineup also highlights a growing trend. Since iTunes rendered obsolete the old soundtrack model of one big hit and 12 tracks of filler (see *Titanic*, *8 Mile*), labels are scrambling for a new approach. "Soundtracks haven't been selling for a while," Tortella says. "The goal

now is to build a mood and a narrative, so people connect with it almost like they would an artist." That job is easier with a film like *Twilight*, which comes with a rabid fan base in the tens of millions. Still, Atlantic isn't leaving anything to chance. The label plans a full-on marketing blitz, including co-branded tours with Hot Topic and MySpace, exclusive bonus tracks for iTunes, and TV appearances by Death Cab to promote the album's lead single, "Meet Me on the Equinox."

And beyond its cash-cow potential, *New Moon* could provide up-and-coming indie acts with something even more valuable: a chance to connect with impressionable young fans. "I still remember being a 13-year-old suburban goth and learning about bands from the *Romeo + Juliet* soundtrack," says Annie Clark, a.k.a. St. Vincent, who can be heard in the new film duetting with Bon Iver. "This is a cool way to introduce kids to music they might otherwise never hear."

# HOT LIST



## DEVENDRA BANHART

### "Baby"

Freak-folk emperor Banhart sounds neither freaky nor folky on the lead single from his new disc—it's a summery jam with a Lou Reed-meets-Vampire Weekend-at-yoga-camp vibe.

## THE DRUMS

### "Let's Go Surfing"

On this buoyant single, the new Brooklyn duo hit on a heretofore unheard stylistic fusion: half "Boys Don't Cry," half "Surfin' Safari." Just be sure to put on waterproof mascara before you hit the waves.

## NORAH JONES

### "Chasing Pirates"

Once we found out Norah was into pirates, we cut off our left leg and started wearing an eyepatch. No luck yet, but in the meantime we're grooving to her uncharacteristically perky new single. Aarrrr!

## T-PAIN

### "Take Your Shirt Off"

Asher Roth, you're no longer spring break's king. This shameless, maniacally funky jam will soundtrack wet-T-shirt contests from Fort Lauderdale to South Padre Island. Personal note to T-Pain: Keep your shirt on. Please.

## JOY ORBISON

### "Hyph Mngo"

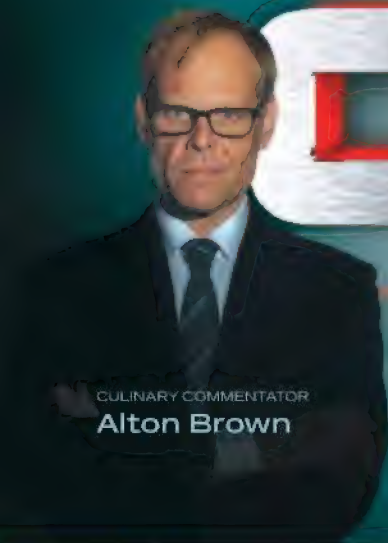
Sadly, not a Joy Division-Roy Orbison mashup—but almost as awesome. The U.K. dubstep producer's buzzy 12-inch has an icy, superfuturistic vibe and an off-kilter beat so nasty, we slipped a disc trying to dance to it. Vicodin, stat!



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VAN MORRISON**



## THE RISE OF MUSE

[Cont. from 13] rock, classical outbursts and Bellamy's apocalyptic broadsides, fired in a glass-spear falsetto – was Number One in 16 countries, including the U.K., and Number Three in the U.S. *The Resistance* is surely the only hit album in the world right now with a song – “United States of Eurasia (+ Collateral Damage)” – that includes a vocal homage to Queen, a quote from Frederic Chopin’s “Nocturne in E Flat Major” and lyrics inspired by *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, the 1998 book by Carter-administration national-security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.

Muse’s American success has been a long time coming. Bellamy, Howard, also 31, and Wolstenholme, 30 – schoolmates from Teignmouth, a small town on England’s southwest coast, who started playing together in 1994 – have sold 8 million albums worldwide, and they filled London’s Wembley Stadium on their own in 2007. “But we’ve always been a bit behind in America,” Wolstenholme admits. Howard is more blunt: “The first two albums didn’t count there.” An early U.S. deal with Madonna’s Maverick label ended after Muse’s 1999 debut, *Showbiz*, in part because of a company order that Bellamy lighten up on the falsetto. Muse finally started touring here in earnest in 2004; three years later, they sold out New York’s Madison Square Garden.

“It’s been a gradual building, and a pleasure comes with that,” says Bellamy, talking at cheerful machine-gun speed. “We didn’t get there with any massive hit songs or a hit album, although they’ve done well. We don’t owe anybody anything. It comes from putting on good shows and having a good connection with fans.”

Those fans run a bizarre gamut from *Twilight* author Stephenie Meyer, who has cited the band as an inspiration for her bestselling quartet of vampire romances (the group also has songs on the soundtracks to both of the *Twilight* movies), to conservative demagogue Glenn Beck, who has played “Upris-

ing” on his syndicated radio show. “I don’t know much about him,” Bellamy confesses, “apart from a few questionable views on some social things.”

The singer’s own politics may be best described as aggressive skepticism. “I am hungry for an unrest/Let’s push this beyond a peaceful protest,” he sings over the prog-rock turmoil of “Unnatural Selection,” which Bellamy wrote after the death of an innocent bystander, pushed by a policeman, during demonstrations against the

holme claims the bandmates laughed a lot while working on “United States of Eurasia,” specifically at “the Queen bit. It’s so ridiculous.”

In fact, the studio where Muse recorded *The Resistance* is a bunker – a man-made cave inside a mountain near Bellamy’s home at Como. He created the facility by converting dug-out spaces previously used as storage areas and wine cellars. “You get in a lift and go two floors underground,” he says. “Something rubbed off too. The

“My dad got burned by the industry – he didn’t get paid anything,” Matt says. At home, there was “no glamour, no sense I was being brought up by anybody famous.” Matt didn’t pick up the guitar until his early teens, shortly after his parents divorced. “I’m sure it had something to do with him,” he says. “I missed him and turned to the guitar.” (Wolstenholme’s father worked in the coal industry; Howard’s dad was a tailor, specializing in academic gowns and church vestments.)

**“I do have slight paranoid tendencies,” says frontman Bellamy.**



**UNDERGROUND ‘RESISTANCE’** Bellamy, Wolstenholme and Howard (from left) recorded their album in a studio built into an Italian mountainside. “We were cut off down there,” Bellamy says.

G-20 summit meeting this past spring in London.

Bellamy loathes politicians on the left and the right – “I can’t believe we leave actual policymaking to a small network of people unaccountable to their voters” – and is a keen student of conspiracy theories, up to a point. “I’m a curious person,” he says, and, he insists, “a rational thinker. There is loads of stuff on the Internet suggesting 9/11 was an inside job. But that is not my belief.”

“He likes extremes,” Howard says of Bellamy’s songwriting. “Those things work better with our music anyway.” The biggest misconception about Muse, he says, is “we’re these serious dudes who think the world’s gonna end in the next 10 minutes.” (Wolsten-

usual paranoia on our records was accentuated by being cut off down there, watching *BBC World News* all day long.” When asked just how paranoid he is, Bellamy doesn’t flinch. His Italian girlfriend is, he says, “a fully qualified psychologist. She tells me I do have slight paranoid tendencies.”

Bellamy also has genuine rock history in his family tree. His father, George, was a guitarist in the Sixties British band the Tornados. Their 1962 instrumental space-pop classic, “Telstar,” a tribute to a communications satellite, produced by Joe Meek, was the first American Number One single by a British group. But George was working as a building contractor and plumber when Matt was born in Cambridge in 1978.

Matt says he can now see some of the Tornados’ influence in Muse songs such as “Knights of Cydonia,” the big galactic-Western finish of the 2006 album *Black Holes and Revelations*. “It still stands out as really unusual music, especially for its time,” Matt says of his father’s biggest hit. “I suppose I always thought that being innovative, out of the ordinary, was a good thing.”

“Weirdly, he thinks I’ve done way better, in terms of success,” Matt adds. “I control my own destiny. His main concern was that no one could push us around. Although until I get a Number One in America, I’ll always have a slight chip on my shoulder.” He laughs. “If I can get a Number One album there, we’re truly even.”



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# Norah Jones' Heartbreak Anthems

**Album** *The Fall*  
**Due Out** November 17th

By Austin Scaggs

**W**HILE NORAH JONES' dog, Ralph, chases a rubber toy down the hallway of her Manhattan apartment, his master sits nearby in her home studio, adding the final touches to her fourth LP, *The Fall*. The record is Jones' breakup album in more than one way: Gone is her ex-boyfriend, Lee Alexander, the primary co-writer and bassist on her first three albums, and also gone is the tightknit group of New York folk and jazz musicians she's recorded and toured with since her first album. Jones and Alexander's relationship reached its breaking point two years ago, at the end of a grueling world tour. "It became really rough," she says. "It was the end of a little era for us as a band."

For the new album, Jones came up with a whole new sound: atmospheric, hazy and brooding, with little jazz or country influence. "I wrote all of the songs on guitar," says Jones, who plays more guitar than piano. By May, she had amassed 17 new songs, including collaborations with Ryan Adams on "Light As a Feather" and Okkervil River's



**FLYING SOLO**  
 Jones at her  
 New York  
 home studio  
 in July

Will Sheff on the dynamic rocker "Stuck."

Heading into the studio without her usual band was daunting. "I'd never done it without my friends," she says. "I kind of gave up on finding a producer." She eventually hired the engineer of her "favorite-sounding" record—Tom Waits' *Mule Variations*—Jacquire King, who most recently co-produced Kings of Leon's *Only By the Night*. Says Jones, "He's definitely helped me out of my comfort zone."

Though her piano is mostly absent, Jones' intimate vocals are still front and center on songs like the breakup ballad

"Back to Manhattan" and the chugging first single, "Chasing Pirates." To help her flesh out the tracks, Jones called upon session players like drummer Joey Waronker and guitarists Smokey Hormel and Marc Ribot. "I wanted to get out of my little circle that I've always been in," says Jones.

Jones says that she's still on good terms with her old bandmates and doesn't rule out future projects. "Everybody's happy," she says. "Even Lee—we're still friends, and we really want to play music again together someday. But the breakup record is probably not the one to start on."

## STUDIO NOTES

■ New Jersey rockers the **Gaslight Anthem** are writing songs for the follow-up to their 2008 breakout, *The '59 Sound*, which should come out early next year. "The songs sound like Tom Waits' storytelling and the Clash playing as a band," says singer Brian Fallon, "but with some big Motown-style choruses in there."

■ **Band of Horses** are finishing up overdubs for their third disc, due out next year. "We keep rerecording the songs," says frontman Ben Bridwell. "I think we're gonna get it right this time."

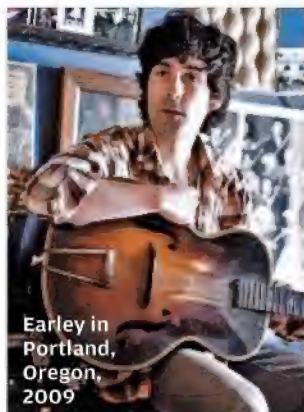
# Hemingway, Old Testament Inspire Blitzen Trapper CD

**Album** Title TBD  
**Due Out** 2010

By Douglas Wolk

**B**LITZEN TRAPPER frontman Eric Earley is spending a rare day off from the road to get some work done. Today, he's adding off-the-cuff harmonies and a multitracked guitar break to an untitled, Paul McCartney-ish piano rocker.

It's one of about 20 tracks in progress for Blitzen Trapper's fifth album, due out sometime in 2010. While Earley is tinkering, the band's drummer, Brian Adrian Koch, and keyboardist, Drew Laughery, are hang-



**Earley in**  
 Portland,  
 Oregon,  
 2009

ing out and reading upstairs—as usual, Earley is taking care of most of the recording on his own. "I don't even go to all the sessions," says Koch. "Eric's a

really decent drummer, and he knows exactly what he wants, so sometimes he'll just do it himself." Laughery agrees: "I just come and listen."

Following the success of 2008's *Furr*, the Blitzen's been touring a lot; they'll spend October in the States before heading to Australia. Whenever they get a few days off, they duck into the studio to add to Earley's ever-growing pile of songs.

"I really don't know what the record's going to be like," Earley says, adding that he usually lets his bandmates edit the track listing. "I didn't even make *Furr*," he jokes. "I just recorded about 35 songs, and then everyone said, 'Oh, we like

*these!*" Still, he's particularly enthusiastic about a new song called "The Ballad of Burning Tongue," and he mentions "The Eagle With the Head of a Ram," "Heaven and Earth" and "A Man Who Would Speak True" as other favorites.

If those titles sound rather Old Testament, there's a reason. "I've been reading the Bible quite a bit," Earley says. "Books inform my songs more than anything. I'm reading *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and some fantasy, like Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. And I've been re-reading Flannery O'Connor as well. She's one of my favorites. There's a lot of stories going on this record."



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# Brat-Rappers Storm the VMAs

After scoring a Top 10 hit with "Don't Trust Me," 3OH!3 party in New York  
By Jenny Eliscu

**S**ITTING IN BUMPER-TO-BUMPER New York traffic a couple of blocks from the MTV Video Music Awards, 3OH!3's Nathaniel Motte and Sean Foreman have a prob-

## ON THE TOWN

lem. Thanks to nerves, some preshow champagne in honor of their nomination for Best New Artist and swigs from a flask of whiskey, they both have to take a leak. Badly. Motte bolts from the car and sneaks into a nearby subway station. Sighing, singer Foreman, 24, resigns himself to the only other sensible option. "This is how you do it on tour," he says, and pees into an empty water bottle.

The VMAs are Motte and Foreman's first awards show – in addition to being nominated, they're performing their chart-topping emo-electro hit, "Don't Trust Me," with the house band. They've got a couple of dozen red roses to give out to reporters on the red carpet at Radio City Music Hall, and Motte's thinking of blowing everyone's minds by answering questions in French, which he speaks fluently. (His mom's from the South of France, and he grew up spending his summers there.) But their entrance ends up being a little humbling: After the initial pop of flashes dies down, a VMA production staffer, not recognizing the duo, attempts to usher Motte and Foreman off the carpet, saying it's for "talent only."

Beatmaker Motte, 25, is a six-foot-seven looker with a mop of long hair; Foreman resembles a certain chisel-jawed NFL quarterback closely enough that, rolling down the window of the SUV to chat up the fans piled behind the police barricades, he announces, "Hi,



### Almost Famous

Emo rappers 3OH!3 scored one of 2009's biggest hits with "Don't Trust Me" – and celebrated with a blowout VMA weekend. Motte and Foreman rocked a VMA kickoff gig (1), popped bubbly in their hotel (2) and hit the red carpet (3) before partying all night (4).

I'm Tom Brady." Yet 3OH!3's ascent to pop stardom has been so fast that you can hardly blame anyone for not recognizing them. At the start of last summer, they were just another pair of kids busting their balls on the Warped Tour. Barely more than a year later, they've sold 2.4 million copies of their irreverent, sour-grapes party jam, "Don't Trust Me," whose hook admonishes a girl to "do the Helen Keller, and talk with your hips." "We had both just been dumped by our



lective. "Nat had a lot of records, so he'd throw on instrumentals, and I'd freestyle in his basement," says Foreman, who, like Motte, graduated with honors. "We'd work on a physics assignment, listen to some music."

Motte started toying around with

girlfriends when we recorded the album," says Motte, "so we were pretty bitter."

The pair, both Boulder, Colorado, natives, met in physics class at the University of Colorado in 2003 and immediately bonded over a shared love of underground hip-hop artists like Canadian rapper Buck 65 and genre-bending MCs from San Francisco's Anticon col-

beats, building digital samples from organic sounds – his own voice, guitars, the sound of paper clips rattling – while Foreman honed his MC chops in freestyle battles with his buddies, developing a style that combined elements from indie rock, hip-hop and emo.

3OH!3's influences came from the underground, but Motte and Foreman felt alien-

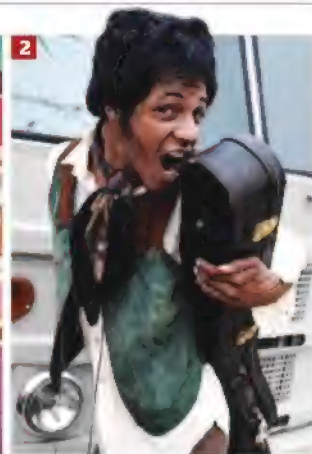
Photographs (3) by C. TAYLOR CROTHERS



ated by their scene's disdain for the kind of ridiculously catchy hooks they hoped to write. "We started making music that was just fun," says Motte. "We wanted our shows to feel like parties, and to convey a sense of inclusiveness, where no one has to feel foolish for having a good time." Or as Foreman puts it, "We're serious about having fun."

There were moments early on when their commitment to 3OH!3 flagged: Motte, who was accepted to medical school at UC Boulder in 2007, deferred admission a second time this year. "In my head, it wasn't like I was going to be able to convince Nat to *not* go to med school," says Foreman. "I tried, believe me, but he was locked in." Motte says he'd still like to study medicine – dermatology, in particular, appeals to him – but he acknowledges that the dumbest thing he could do at this point would be to quit while 3OH!3 are doing so well. New singles have hit the radio – "Starstruck," featuring guest vocals by Katy Perry, and the piano-driven ballad "Still Around" – and the duo are eager to get back into the studio later this year to start something new. "We're making a great living and seeing the world," says Motte. "For the foreseeable future, there's no way I'll give this up."

They didn't win the Best New Artist VMA – that honor went to Lady Gaga – but Foreman thinks maybe they're better off not having to live up to that kind of pressure just yet. Meanwhile, Motte was relieved Gaga won, for his own reasons: "I had to pee again anyway," he says a couple of days later. "I don't know if it was one too many adult beverages, but most of the night is a blur. I attempted to make progress toward my goal of finding a celebrity girlfriend, but I didn't get any phone numbers." He pauses, and laughs at his own mock bravado. "Not that I asked for any."



### California Love

(1) Buffalo Springfield in 1966: Richie Furay, Bruce Palmer, Stephen Stills, Neil Young, Dewey Martin (clockwise from top left). (2) Love frontman Arthur Lee in 1969. (3) The Byrds: Roger McGuinn, David Crosby and Gene Clark (from left) in July 1967.



## Riot on the Sunset Strip: L.A. Rarities Unearthed on New Box

Latest 'Nuggets' comp collects hippie jams and raw-power anthems

By David Fricke

**I**N THE MID-1960S, ROCK & roll heaven was in session every night somewhere in Los Angeles. The Doors, Love, the Turtles and Buffalo Springfield were among the local bands performing at Sunset

### ARCHIVES

Strip clubs like the Whisky a Go Go and the Trip. The Byrds, the Beach Boys and brazen new acts such as Kaleidoscope, the Seeds, Spirit, and Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band were cutting hit singles and now-classic albums at Hollywood recording studios. "It was about writing songs, recording them, then going out and performing them," says Buffalo Springfield singer-guitarist Richie Furay, describing a typical day for him in 1966 and '67. "I was consumed with making music."

That nonstop energy and ambition are in the 101 songs on the Rhino four-CD set, *Where*

*the Action Is! Los Angeles Nuggets 1965-1968*, the latest in the label's series of boxes based on the 1972 garage-rock anthology, *Nuggets*. The legends of Sixties L.A. rock – all of the above as well as the Monkees, Jan and Dean, the Standells, and Sonny and Cher – are present in pivotal and rare recordings made on the way to hitsville, such as the Byrds' exuberant "You Movin'" and a newly discovered demo of the Springfield's "Sit Down I Think I Love You."

*Action* also exposes the depth and ecstasy of L.A. pop life through singles and obscurities by a wide range of seekers, from composer and Beach Boys collaborator Van Dyke Parks and blues band Rising Sons (with a young Taj Mahal and younger Ry Cooder) to sunshine-pop explorers like the Penny Arcade and the Garden Club. "The idea that Southern California was soft and sweet and didn't have any edge – that wasn't the case," says singer/multi-instrumentalist Chris Darrow of Kaleidoscope, a band that fused folk and psychedelia with Middle Eastern rhythms

and improvisation. "It was a different edge."

*Action* co-producer Andrew Sandoval says he "wanted to shoot the scene from a different angle," to show "how Gary Lewis and the Playboys were related to Iron Butterfly. These bands were on the same bills, in the same studios, just down the street from each other." Frank Zappa and Johnny Rivers, both key Sunset Strip figures, are absent because of licensing issues. But that's more than made up for by cool treasures like "Once Upon a Time," a previously unissued Tim Buckley track, and Parks' 1966 single "Come to the Sunshine," nestled next to an alternate take of the Beach Boys' "Heroes and Villains," which Parks co-wrote. Underneath the Hollywood veneer, L.A. music was, Parks says, "an innovation that cannot be disparaged. Everyone had a sense of purpose hiding under the flower power."

"From the Seeds to the Beach Boys – it says a lot for the music that was happening," Furay says of *Action*. "That is the testimony of the time."



# Mary Travers, Folk's First Superstar

Peter, Paul and Mary's beautiful, golden-voiced singer dies at 72

By David Browne

MARY TRAVERS, THE Peter, Paul and Mary singer whose bell-tone vocals helped bring folk and protest music into the mainstream in the 1960s, died of complications from leukemia and a bone-marrow transplant on September 16th in Danbury, Connecticut. She was 72. With her straight blond hair, bohemian style and powerful, clear voice, Travers brought glamour to the hitmaking folk trio – and helped drive songs the group recorded by Pete Seeger (including “If I Had a Hammer”) and Bob Dylan (“Blowin’ in the Wind”) into the Top 10. Travers’ poignant lead vocal on their hit cover of John Denver’s “Leaving on a Jet Plane” struck a chord as American troops were departing for Vietnam.

Raised in New York’s Greenwich Village, Travers joined up with fellow local folk singers Peter Yarrow and Noel Paul Stookey in 1961, at the suggestion of manager Albert Grossman (who guided the career of a young Dylan). “She was about as gregarious a person as I ever met,” says Stookey. “She was in your face, happy, blond hair fly-



FOREVER YOUNG Travers with Yarrow (left) and Stookey

ing, saying, ‘You gotta see this, you gotta hear this.’ Energetic spirit.”

*Peter, Paul and Mary*, the trio’s debut album, was released in 1962 and became an immediate hit. (ROLLING STONE named it the 19th-best album of the Sixties in 1990.) In 1963, the trio performed at the March on Washington and watched as Martin Luther King Jr. gave his historic “I Have a Dream” speech. “Mary took my hand and said, ‘Peter, we are watch-

ing history being made,’” Yarrow recalls. “If you asked her what was the most seminal, moving moment experienced as a group, she would mention precisely that moment.”

For all their onstage harmony, Peter, Paul and Mary were volatile offstage, and Travers was particularly opinionated about the group’s direction, politics and music. Travers was especially fussy about lyrics; she revised Denver’s “For Bobbie,” for instance, making it “For

Baby” to reflect her own experiences as a single mother during the trio’s early days. “Mary was very outspoken, always,” says legendary producer Phil Ramone, a recording engineer on several PPM albums. “This was not a girl who was just going to be cutesy like lead singers had been in bands. She created a much bigger role. She took no prisoners when it was what she believed in.”

The trio disbanded in 1970 but reunited in 1978, after which they resumed recording and playing benefits for political causes like education and the environment. Although weakened after her leukemia treatment and subsequent bone-marrow transplant, Travers continued to perform until mid-2009. “She was still twinkly,” Stookey recalls of their final show, in New Jersey. “Here she is with oxygen and tubes in her nose, and she’s singing the shit out of the ballads.” (In June, President Obama sent her a letter that read, in part, “Your passion for music and your ability to stir change has helped define a genre and a generation.”) “Mary will never die – not the things she believed in, not the things she sang about,” says Yarrow. “She personified that sound that called us together.”

# Punk-Rock Poet Jim Carroll Dies at 60

By David Fricke

AFTER JIM CARROLL met Patti Smith in 1970, he gave her a copy of his 1967 pamphlet *Organic Trains*, which he had published himself as a teenager. Smith remembers her reaction. Even at that age, “Jim was a fully formed poet,” she says. “He had the language skills, the depth. And he was young. Rock & roll was part of his language.” For a time, Carroll – who died of a heart attack at age 60 in New York on September 11th – was a rock star, scoring a college-

radio hit with the breakneck elegy “People Who Died” from his 1980 debut, *Catholic Boy*. “There was no gap between the way he recited poetry and how he sang it,” says Smith’s guitarist Lenny Kaye, who also played with Carroll. “He put you inside the song.”

A New York native, Carroll was a high school basketball star who turned to heroin and writing with equal intensity. *The Basketball Diaries*, published in 1978, was his fearless account of growing up in athletics, poetry and addiction, drawn from his teenage



Carroll performing in Los Angeles in the early 1980s

journals. (Leonardo DiCaprio starred in the 1995 film version.) The 1970 collection *4 Ups and 1 Down* and 1973’s *Living at the Movies* secured Carroll’s reputation among established poets – Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso were early

fans – and rock icons such as the Velvet Underground’s Lou Reed. Carroll can be heard ordering drinks on the 1970 tape that became the Velvets album *Live at Max’s Kansas City*.

Carroll moved to San Francisco in the Seventies to kick heroin. After Smith got him to join her group onstage at a show there, he started the Jim Carroll Band, which got an Atlantic Records deal with help from Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards. Carroll also cowrote songs with Blue Öyster Cult and Boz Scaggs. But by the Nineties, Carroll had returned to his primary love, writing. He was working on a novel, *Trip-tych*, when he died. “Jim knew he had a gift,” Smith says. “It evolved into rock & roll. But his true calling was poetry.”



# Déjà Vu: Country Rock's New Crop

**L**AST YEAR, FLEET FOXES, BLITZEN TRAPPER AND BON Iver made beards, acoustic guitars and Crosby, Stills and Nash's debut album key indie-rock accessories. But what seemed like a refreshing departure a few months ago now feels like a full-blown trend with a new crop of acts paying homage to their

Woodstock and Laurel Canyon predecessors. "This music maybe represents some of the things that Cash and Dylan believed in," says singer Cory Chisel, who just released his debut LP of dusty folk rock, *Death Won't Send a Letter*. "I'm just trying to make a record that's missing from my collection."

NICOLE FREHSE

Artist	Hometown	Sounds Like	Rural Cred	Down With	Key Tracks
 <b>The Avett Brothers</b>	Concord, North Carolina	 <b>Cat Stevens</b> meets "Dueling Banjos": These real-life bros show off their Appalachian roots with bluegrass pickin', pretty harmonies and wholesome-as-pie love songs.	On their first tour, in 2002, the Avetts crashed at campsites instead of motels. "We took a pickup, a tent and a shotgun," recalls Scott. "We went out thinking it was a wild frontier."	 <b>Rick Rubin</b> produced their new LP, <i>I and Love and You</i> . <b>Dave Matthews</b> tapped them to open recent shows.	The stately, piano-driven title cut: These Southern dudes wrote the best song about Brooklyn since the Beastie Boys.
 <b>Cory Chisel</b>	Appelton, Wisconsin	 Sings like Nebraska-era <b>Springsteen</b> with gospel organs, strummy guitars and borderline-schmaltzy lyrics: "I've seen you bloom like a flower, but you are fading in the absence of rain."	 Dresses like a Deadwood extra; writes in his family's Minnesota cabin. "You can hear your thoughts in the woods," says Chisel. "The environment becomes a critic."	Shares a manager with <b>Jackson Browne</b> ; members of the <b>Raconteurs</b> guest on his new album.	The haunting "Tennessee," a ballad about lost love, in the style of <b>Dylan's</b> "Girl From the North Country."
 <b>Dawes</b>	North Hills, California	L.A. scenesters cherry-pick from the best of 1969: Frontman Taylor Goldsmith sings like a less-tortured <b>Richard Manuel</b> while the band backs him up with goose-bump-y, <b>CSN</b> -style harmonies.	Dawes cut their debut in roots-rock ground zero: Laurel Canyon. "Living in L.A., we romanticize the country lifestyle," says Goldsmith. "Our music reflects that."	 <b>Jenny Lewis</b> invited Dawes to open for her this year.	The achingly pretty ballad "That Western Skyline," which will have you crying into your sack of primo medicinal.
 <b>J. Tillman</b>	Seattle	The <b>Fleet Foxes</b> drummer's solo tunes are molasses-slow, <b>Nick Drake</b> -style mope-folk, amped with fancy-pants instrumentation (dulcimers, cellos) and creepy sound effects.	 Is Jesus, basically: Has a stupendous beard, worked as a carpenter until this year.	His bros in <b>Fleet Foxes</b> , obviously. And <b>Chloë Sevigny</b> was spotted at a recent L.A. gig.	With its breathy vocals and acoustic tinkling, "Howling Light" is prime hippie-chick seduction music.
 <b>The Duke and the King</b>	Palenville, New York (only 12 miles from Woodstock)	Singer Simone Felice has a wispy, <b>Donovan</b> -like delivery; instrumentalist Robert Burke's psych-folk grooves are mellowier than Matthew McConaughey at an eco-spa.	Cut debut in a Woodstock cabin; band named after characters in <b>Huckleberry Finn</b> . "It's not the Mississippi, but I grew up on the Hudson, so I related to the magic of that book," says Felice.	 Will jam with Woodstock royalty <b>Levon Helm</b> at his <b>Midnight Ramble in November</b> .	"Still Remember Love," a jaunty pop stroll with chiming guitars, hazy vocals and flower-child musings.
 <b>Phosphorescent</b>	Toney, Alabama	 On his new disc of <b>Willie Nelson</b> covers, <b>To Willie</b> , Matthew Houck has a melancholy warble like Nineties indie-folk pioneer <b>Will Oldham</b> and appealingly shaggy acoustic arrangements.	 Left home at 18 to tour the Southwest, where he lived out of his pickup for six months.	Nelson asked him to play Farm Aid 2009. "I missed the call, but I totally saved the voicemail," says Houck.	The solemn, churchy cover of Nelson's pleading <b>Red Headed Stranger</b> cut "Can I Sleep in Your Arms."



# Run-DMC Bring Rap to the Masses

The tough rhymes and big riffs of trio's third LP turn them into stars

By Andy Greene

**B**Y THE SUMMER OF 1985, Run-DMC were the biggest rap group in the world. In just three years they'd gone from playing in Queens parks to being the only hip-hop group invited to Live Aid. Still, they had yet to land a single on the *Billboard* Hot 100 or make what they considered to be a consistent album. Meanwhile, a new crop of rappers was getting buzz on the hip-hop scene. "EPMD and Eric B. and Rakim were moving in on us," says Darryl "DMC" McDaniels. "*Raising Hell* was birthed out of the need to improve ourselves. We said, 'We gotta make an album where every song is incredible. No filler.'"

The new material began as improvised bits onstage during Run-DMC's 1985 tour with Whodini, Grandmaster Flash and the Fat Boys. "On the bus after shows, we got into the groove of turning them into songs," says Joseph "Reverend Run" Simmons. "Our momentum was amazing at that point." Their manager (and Run's brother), Russell Simmons, suggested that Rick Rubin, his partner in their new label, Def Jam, co-produce the disc. The 22-year-old Rubin was still living in his NYU dorm room, but he had already produced LL Cool J's debut, *Radio*, and had just begun work on the Beastie Boys' *License to Ill*. "Early hip-hop songs were often 10 minutes long, with no chorus," says Rubin. "I tried to get the tracks more like rock songs because that's what I grew up with."

Rubin moved the group to Chung King Studios, a small, rundown space in Manhattan's Chinatown filled with vintage 1960s recording equipment. "Their prior records were poppy and polished," says Rubin, who gave the record a hard-edged but deeply funky feel. "I wanted this to be a credible street record, and Chung King was a great room for that." Unlike for their first two albums, the trio had an arsenal of near-



**HELL-RAISERS** DMC, Run, Russell Simmons, publicist Bill Adler, Joe Perry, Rick Rubin, Jam Master Jay and Steven Tyler (clockwise from top left) recording "Walk This Way," March 9th, 1986, New York



## Raising Hell

**Released** June 1986

**Chart Peak** Number Three

**Produced by** Rick Rubin, Russell Simmons

**Recorded at** Chung King, New York

**Key Tracks** "My Adidas," "Walk This Way," "It's Tricky," "Peter Piper"

ly finished songs before they stepped into the studio. "It's Tricky" – built around a sample from the Knack's "My Sharona" – was a message to people who thought rap music was simplistic. "That was us saying, 'Yeah, we bad, we wear gold chains and y'all motherfuckers want to wear Adidas – but this shit ain't easy,'" says DMC. "My Adidas," according to DMC, was inspired by a vision Russell Simmons had while smoking angel dust in Queens. "We went to see him, and he said, 'You have to come up with a song that goes 'My Adidas, standing on 2-5th Street,'" says DMC. "He was real high, so he said that shit about 50 times."

Chung King – which served as Def Jam's unofficial clubhouse at the time – had a party atmosphere, with LL Cool J,

the Beasties and Heavy D often stopping by. "The first thing we did when we got to the studio was make sure we had a case of Olde English and a bunch of weed," says DMC. "It was indulging 24/7, but that bred a lot of creativity." Says Run, "Cheeseburgers and weed fueled that record."

The disc was nearly in the can when Jam Master Jay spontaneously spun a copy of Aerosmith's "Walk This Way" while Run and DMC freestyled rhymes over the intro. It gave Rubin an idea.

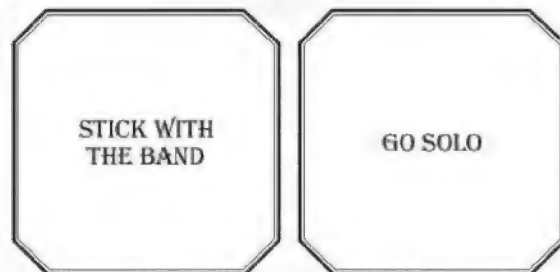
## Classic Album Rewind

With the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame gearing up for its 25th anniversary, *ROLLING STONE* will look back at the stories behind five pivotal albums by Hall of Fame artists. This is the fourth in the series.

"The album needed one more element," he says. "I thought there had to be a way to present this to rock fans so people would think, 'This really isn't that different than the kind of music I like.'" He asked Run and DMC to rap Aerosmith's original lyrics. "We said, 'Motherfucker, this is hillbilly gibberish, this is fucking bullshit!'" says DMC. Russell Simmons insisted, and Rubin increased the pressure by inviting Steven Tyler and Joe Perry down to the studio. "We needed someone to play guitar and sing the chorus," Rubin says. "Who better than the people who do it every day?"

Within months of its June 1986 release, *Raising Hell* was certified double-platinum – instantly transforming Run-DMC into global superstars. "Walk This Way" hit Number Four on the Hot 100, and its video became an MTV staple. Weeks before *Raising Hell* came out, Run-DMC previewed the record at an Apollo Theater show. "The reaction from the audience was crazy," says DMC. "Me and Jay and Run knew. We said to each other, 'Yo, we got some shit!'"





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# Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne: 'I'm Not a Good Musician'

The psych-rock vet on his band's new double LP and the best festival ever  
By Austin Scaggs

INSTEAD OF HEADING TO a real recording studio, the Flaming Lips cut most of their 12th album in the living room of multi-instrumentalist Steven Drozd's Oklahoma City home. "We thought we were just working on demos," says singer Wayne Coyne, 48. "But

## Q&A

that house gave us a groovy sound." The result is an epic double album that abandons the catchy psych pop of their past few records for intense stoner-rock jams like "Convinced of the Hex" and "Your Bats." "A lot of music that is utterly sloppy is better because of it, like the Stones and Zeppelin," says Coyne, whose band is headlining San Francisco's Treasure Island Music Festival on October 18th. "You take the slop away, and it's not cool."

*The first 30 seconds of the album is weird guitar noises and feedback. What did your label say when they heard it?*

That's why it's such a great beginning. It's like, "We're gonna jam!" The label knows we're freaks, and they love it.

*Why did you make a double album?*

I always go back to something George Martin says about the Beatles' White Album: "It would have made a great single record." If that were a single record, one of my favorite tracks of all time, "Revolution 9," wouldn't have made it. So we started recording the weird shit, and we liked it so much we just kept with it.

*You played bass on "Embryonic." How would you rate your musical skills?*

I'm not a good musician, even on a punk-rock level. I think you either have it or you don't, and I don't. But punk rock



**FAR-OUT SOUNDS**  
On their new LP, Coyne and Co. craft sprawling stoner-rock jams.

**"Lots of music is better when it's sloppy. Take the slop away, and it's not cool."**

wouldn't be here if music was left in the hands of musicians. My heroes like Gibby Haynes, Henry Rollins and John Lydon wouldn't be around.

*If someone handed you a guitar at a party, what would you play?*

Growing up, I could probably play what I thought was "Smoke on the Water," but I don't know how to do other people's songs. We were at a party in Barcelona, and [original Beatles drummer] Pete Best was playing. Jackson Browne was there, and he got asked to play onstage. He said, "I don't do that." If he doesn't do that, someone of my caliber never should.

*The Lips are festival veterans - what's the best one you guys have played?*

I'd say Lollapalooza in 1994. The Beastie Boys had just released *Ill Communication*. They were at their peak. The Breeders were on the radio, and we played with the Boredoms, Stereolab, the Palace Brothers and Guided by Voices.

*In Oklahoma City, there's the Flaming Lips Alley.*

*What goes on there?*

I wish I could say all kinds of wicked, drug-deal-y shit. It's just this street that connects a big venue with a few restaurants in the edgy part of town. As soon as the mayor said, "We should give them a street," it all became really controversial. People started saying, "We can't give them a street; they have a song called 'Jesus ShOOTin' Heroin.'" **ES**

## IN THE NEWS

### Rock Hall of Fame Ballot Announced

The ballot for next year's Rock & Roll Hall of Fame class is one of the most diverse ever, ranging from prog legends **Genesis** to alt-rock kings the **Red Hot Chili Peppers** to hip-hop pioneer **LL Cool J**. "This is the happiest day of my career since Rick Rubin discovered me," says the rapper. "It makes me feel like I mattered a bit. It's a great feeling." Also up for induction are **Abba**, **Kiss**, the **Stooges**, **Donna Summer**, **Darlene Love**, **Laura Nyro**, the **Chantels**, the **Hollies** and **Jimmy Cliff**. Artists are eligible for induction 25 years after their debut release. The inductees will be announced in January; the ceremony will be held in New York on March 15th.

### Pavement to Reunite in 2010

Nineties indie-rock greats **Pavement** are re-forming for a tour a decade after they broke up. The only confirmed dates are a four-night stand next September in New York's Central Park, but a full tour is expected. "There's festivals that we're talking to, like Coachella," says Pavement guitarist **Scott "Spiral Stairs" Kannberg**. Like the massively successful Pixies reunion tour of 2004-2005, Pavement are expected to play to larger audiences now than they did during their heyday. "A whole generation of kids discovered Pavement after we had disbanded and made us into a huger thing than we ever envisioned," says Kannberg. "So I guess we can tour now and make those people happy."

## IN BRIEF

■ **Chris Martin**, **Adam Sandler**, **Jimmy Buffett**, **No Doubt**, **Fleet Foxes** and **Monsters of Folk** are set to perform at **Neil Young's** annual Bridge School Benefit in Mountain View, California, on October 24th and 25th.

■ **Death Cab for Cutie's Ben Gibbard** and actor-singer **Zooey Deschanel** married near Seattle on September 19th. Meanwhile, **Lucinda Williams** and manager **Tom Overby** tied the knot in Minneapolis on September 18th.

■ **Lady Gaga** and **Kanye West** will kick off a three-month-long co-headlining tour on November 10th in Phoenix.



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"I have been diagnosed with the swine flu. Unfortunately, I will survive." —Marilyn Manson

# Random Notes



## EVERYBODY HATES CHRIS

The court of public opinion may never excuse Chris Brown, but the disgraced R&B star put his hands to good use, kicking off 180 days of community service with brush-clearing and trash-hauling in Virginia.

## PAUL ON THE MALL

Paul Simon visited Nancy Pelosi (inset) on Capitol Hill and threw his weight behind Obama's health care overhaul.



## PAPA JOHN

The Rocket Man Clan might expand. Elton John hopes to adopt, after a visit to a hospital for HIV-infected orphans in the Ukraine.



Anastasio with the New York Philharmonic

## Phish-tastic Philharmonic

It was probably the first time nitrous balloons were sold outside Carnegie Hall, but then again, it was Trey Anastasio's first headlining slot there. Backed by the New York Philharmonic, the jam king played his opus "Time Turns Elastic" and Phish faves like "You Enjoy Myself" and "First Tube." "I love Ravel and Eric Clapton equally," said Anastasio. "Why can't we have a piece of music that's half Ravel and half *Disraeli Gears*?"





Thousands cheered on Juanes, even a bemused Che Guevara (inset).



## Havana Fiesta

A *muy grande* gaggle of Cubans – some say as many as 1.2 million – descended on Havana's Revolution Square for a Peace Without Borders concert starring Colombian superstar Juanes. "We have overcome fear to be here," the singer told the crowd. He received death threats in the days leading up to the apolitical show, which aimed to spread a message of peace between Cuba and its neighbors. "We have to look to the future."



**BUGGIN' OUT** Marshall "Crazy Eyes" Mathers looked positively possessed as he departed the VMAs.

### LADY TATA

"Dude, you can totally see her flapjacks," said every single hetero man at New York's Hiro Ballroom, where Lady Gaga emerged in this nipple-baring ensemble during a Marc Jacobs fashion-week afterparty.



### THE BARBER OF BERKELEY

Billie Joe Armstrong gladly mohawked a fan at the premiere of the *American Idiot* musical, but he put down the shears when asked to do some manscaping.



**CLASSY!** Career Day it wasn't: Amy Winehouse visited a London school to allegedly berate and spit on kids bullying her goddaughter.



Talk to your doctor.

## Adding ABILIFY

to an antidepressant such as one of these\* can help  
treat unresolved symptoms of depression.



Approximately 2 out of 3 people being treated for depression still have unresolved symptoms.

**Ask your doctor about the option of adding ABILIFY to your current antidepressant.**

ABILIFY is FDA-approved to treat depression in adults when added to an antidepressant.

\*Or generic equivalents where available.

### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

Elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis (eg, an inability to perform daily activities due to increased memory loss) taking ABILIFY have an increased risk of death or stroke. ABILIFY is not approved for treating these patients.

Antidepressants can increase suicidal thoughts and behaviors in children, teens, and young adults. Serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. When taking ABILIFY call your doctor right away if you have new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Patients and their caregivers should be especially observant within the first few months of treatment or after a change in dose. Approved only for adults 18 and over with depression.

- Alert your doctor if you develop very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure, as these may be signs of a rare but potentially fatal condition called neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)
- If you develop abnormal or uncontrollable facial movements, notify your doctor, as these may be signs of tardive dyskinesia (TD), which could become permanent
- If you have diabetes or have risk factors or symptoms of diabetes, your blood sugar should be monitored. High blood sugar has been reported with ABILIFY and medicines like it. In some cases, extreme high blood sugar can lead to coma or death
- Other risks may include lightheadedness upon standing, decreases in white blood cells (which can be serious), seizures, trouble swallowing, or impairment in judgment or motor skills. Until you know how ABILIFY affects you, you should not drive or operate machinery

The common side effects in adults in clinical trials ( $\geq 10\%$ ) include nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety, and insomnia. Tell your doctor about all the medicines you're taking, since there are some risks for drug interactions. You should avoid alcohol while taking ABILIFY.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

**Please read the Important Information about ABILIFY on the adjacent page.**

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ABILIFY

This summary of the Package Insert contains risk and safety information for patients about ABILIFY. This summary does not include all information about ABILIFY and is not meant to take the place of discussions with your healthcare professional about your treatment. Please read this important information carefully before you start taking ABILIFY and discuss any questions about ABILIFY with your healthcare professional.

### Name

ABILIFY® (a-BIL-i-fi) (aripiprazole) (air-ri-PIP-ra-zall)

### What is ABILIFY?

ABILIFY (aripiprazole) is a prescription medicine used as an add-on treatment to antidepressants for Major Depressive Disorder in adults.

### What is depression?

Depression is a common but serious medical condition. Symptoms may include sadness, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, loss of energy, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, insomnia or excessive sleep, a change in appetite causing weight loss or gain, or thoughts of death or suicide. These could be depression symptoms if they interfere with daily life at home, at work, or with friends and last most of the day, nearly every day for at least 2 weeks.

### What is the most important information that I should know about antidepressant medicines, depression, and other serious mental illnesses?

- Antidepressant medicines may increase suicidal thoughts or actions in some children, teenagers, and young adults
- Depression and serious mental illnesses are the most important causes of suicidal thoughts and actions

For more information, see the Prescribing Information and the Medication Guide called *Antidepressant Medicines, Depression and Other Serious Mental Illnesses, and Suicidal Thoughts or Actions*.

### Who should NOT take ABILIFY?

People who are allergic to ABILIFY or to any substance that is in it. Allergic reactions have ranged from rash, hives and itching to difficulty breathing and swelling of the face, lips, or tongue. Please talk with your healthcare professional.

### What is the most important information that I should know about ABILIFY?

Elderly patients, diagnosed with psychosis as a result of dementia (for example, an inability to perform daily activities as a result of increased memory loss), and who are treated with antipsychotic medicines including ABILIFY, are at an increased risk of death when compared to patients who are treated with a placebo (sugar pill). ABILIFY is not approved for the treatment of patients with dementia-related psychosis.

Antidepressants may increase suicidal thoughts or behaviors in some children, teenagers, and young adults, especially within the first few months of treatment or when the dose is changed. Depression and other serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. Patients on antidepressants and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Such symptoms should be reported to the patient's healthcare professional right away, especially if they are severe or occur suddenly. ABILIFY is not approved for use in pediatric patients with depression.

Serious side effects can occur with any antipsychotic medicine, including ABILIFY. Tell your healthcare professional right away if you have any conditions or side effects, including the following:

**Stroke or ministroke in elderly patients with dementia:** An increased risk of stroke and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly

patients with dementia (for example, increased memory loss and inability to perform daily activities). ABILIFY (aripiprazole) is not approved for treating patients with dementia.

**Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS):** Very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure may be signs of NMS, a rare but serious side effect that could be fatal.

**Tardive dyskinesia (TD):** Abnormal or uncontrollable movements of face, tongue, or other parts of body may be signs of a serious condition known as TD, which may be permanent.

**High blood sugar and diabetes:** Patients with diabetes and those having risk factors for diabetes (for example, obesity, family history of diabetes), as well as those with symptoms such as unexpected increases in thirst, urination, or hunger should have their blood sugar levels checked before and during treatment. Increases in blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia), in some cases serious and associated with coma or death, have been reported in patients taking ABILIFY, and medicines like it.

**Orthostatic hypotension:** Lightheadedness or faintness caused by a sudden change in heart rate and blood pressure when rising too quickly from a sitting or lying position (orthostatic hypotension) has been reported with ABILIFY.

**Leukopenia, Neutropenia, and Agranulocytosis:** Decreases in white blood cells (infection fighting cells) have been reported in some patients taking antipsychotic agents, including ABILIFY. Patients with a history of a significant decrease in white blood cell (WBC) count or who have experienced a low WBC due to drug therapy should have their blood tested and monitored during the first few months of therapy.

**Suicidal thoughts:** If you have suicidal thoughts, you should tell your healthcare professional right away.

**Dysphagia:** Medicines like ABILIFY have been associated with swallowing problems (dysphagia). If you had or have swallowing problems, you should tell your healthcare professional.

### What should I talk to my healthcare provider about?

Patients and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior and thoughts of suicide, as well as for anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, difficulty sleeping, irritability, hostility, aggressiveness, impulsivity, restlessness, or extreme hyperactivity. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have thoughts of suicide or if any of these symptoms are severe or occur suddenly. Be especially observant within the first few months of antidepressant treatment or whenever there is a change in dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about any medical conditions you may have and all medicines that you are taking or plan to take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, or herbal products.

### Be sure to tell your healthcare provider:

- If you have suicidal thoughts
- If you have or have had a low white blood cell count (WBC)
- If you or anyone in your family have or had seizures
- If you or anyone in your family have or had high blood sugar or diabetes
- If you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding

### What should I avoid when taking ABILIFY?

- Avoid overheating and dehydration
- Avoid driving or operating hazardous machinery until you know how ABILIFY affects you
- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Avoid breast-feeding an infant

### What are the possible side effects of ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

Common side effects in adults include: nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety and insomnia. It is important to contact your healthcare professional if you experience prolonged, abnormal muscle spasm or contraction which may be signs of a condition called dystonia.

This is not a complete list of side effects. For full patient information, visit [www.abilify.com](http://www.abilify.com). Talk to your healthcare professional if you have questions or develop any side effects.

### What percentage of people stopped taking ABILIFY due to side effects?

In clinical trials, the percentage of adults who discontinued taking ABILIFY due to side effects was 6% and 2% for patients treated with sugar pill.

### Can I safely take ABILIFY while I'm taking other medications?

ABILIFY can be taken with most drugs; however, taking ABILIFY with some medicines may require your healthcare professional to adjust the dosage of ABILIFY.

Some medicines\* include:

- ketoconazole (NIZORAL®)
- quinidine (QUINIDEX®)
- fluoxetine (PROZAC®)
- paroxetine (PAXIL®)
- carbamazepine (TEGRETOL®)

It is important to tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you're taking, just to be sure.

### How should I take ABILIFY?

- Take ABILIFY exactly as directed by your healthcare professional
- ABILIFY is usually taken once a day and can be taken with or without food
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take only your regularly scheduled dose.
- Talk to your healthcare professional before stopping ABILIFY or changing your dose

### General advice about ABILIFY:

- ABILIFY should be kept out of the reach of children and pets
- Store ABILIFY Tablets and the Oral Solution at room temperature
- For patients who must limit their sugar intake, be aware that ABILIFY Oral Solution contains sugar
- For patients who cannot metabolize phenylalanine (those with phenylketonuria or PKU), ABILIFY DISCMELT® contains phenylalanine
- If you have additional questions, talk to your healthcare professional

### Find out more about ABILIFY:

Additional information can be found at [www.abilify.com](http://www.abilify.com)

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# TV's Freakiest Trip

The sci-fi thriller 'Fringe' delivers the strangest, most mind-bending, paranoid cosmic kick in the head since 'The X-Files' By Rob Sheffield

ACCORDING TO THE crackpot science of *Fringe*, there are soft spots in the world where the laws of physics break down. One of these soft spots must be the Fox network, because *Fringe* is the loopyest, druggiest sci-fi show around. Has there ever been a show this blatantly psychedelic? I love these crime fighters because they don't pretend to have any sixth sense – no cop hunches, no hard-won street smarts. They just like to gobble drugs and visit parallel universes. That's how they solve crimes without even having to leave the house. Suck on that, *CSI* nerds!

## Fringe

Thursdays, 9 p.m., Fox

It's the most exciting drama around right now, too strange to fit into any stylistic box – too trippy for a cop show, too tough for sci-fi, with an unfailingly amazing cast and dialogue that dances from flippant bitchery to dazed-and-confused profundity. You don't have to follow the wide-scale conspiracy narrative to enjoy the individual episodes, but the

deeper you dig into it, the more connections you find. On one level, it's about a broken-down American family, but on another, it's the sexy paranoia of *The X-Files* updated for a world that's a lot meaner than the one Mulder and Scully lived in.

FBI agent Olivia Dunham (Anna Torv) leads the Science Team on the trail of a conspiracy they call "the Pattern," connected to the corporate giant Massive Dynamic. Dr. Walter Bishop (John Noble) is the mad scientist who provides the chemicals that send everyone time-traveling and wormhole-surfing. Peter Bishop (Joshua Jackson) is his ne'er-do-well son – when he was a kid, Walter hooked up his brain to a car battery, which explains his sparkly personality. But the real hero might be Cortexiphan, the signature drug invented by the evil genius behind Massive Dynamic, played brilliantly by Leonard Nimoy. But the characters also explore the mind-altering properties of LSD, mescaline, mushrooms and Franken Berry cereal.

The Team are trying to stop biological warfare attacks by the high-end terrorist group ZFT, but they also take on clon-

ing, mind-melding, spinal-fluid vampirism, time travel and the Eighties "Kenneth, what is the frequency?" case. Along the way, they have quintessentially stoner conversations – like, if there was an explosion, could you find out what happened by taking a window from the crime scene and playing it like a record, just in case the psychic trauma left microscopic impressions on the melted glass?

## THE WATCH LIST

### The Modern Family

Wednesdays, 9 p.m., ABC

Al Bundy, free at last! Ed O'Neill, resigning himself to the marital-hellhole typecasting that the sitcom gods created for him, plays a schlub married to hottie Sofia Vergara. They're funny enough to keep this mockumentary from getting dragged down by the other (boring) couples.

### Heroes

Mondays, 8 p.m., NBC

The show might be in decline – even Sylar isn't scary anymore. But new villain Robert Knepper is genuinely disturbing as the cult messiah who emerges as the ringmaster for the forces of evil.

R.S.

(Of course you can, dude! Who's got the Easy Cheese?)

At the end of last season, Olivia broke on through to the other side, finally getting a face-to-face meeting with the elusive Massive Dynamic kingpin, Nimoy – she got to see him in his office, in the mysteriously still-standing World Trade Center. It's an alternate reality where former president John F. Kennedy is still alive, Celtics forward Len Bias is winning MVP awards in the NBA and Gillian Anderson is still making techno records. But if you thought the *Fringe* action was going to get bogged down in this dimension, you're wrong, because this season Olivia is back to her usual universe, with little to show for her visit – except that a few of the bad guys slipped back through the same hole that she did.

Jackson is the most appealing of the Team, as the disaffected loner genius forced to help out with his batshit-crazy scientist father. Until now, Jackson was most famous for playing Pacey on *Dawson's Creek*. This is the first time since then he's gotten the chance to play a screwed-up adult, and it definitely suits him. In one episode, his father visits his gravestone, which might mean that Peter died and got resurrected. Or it might just mean he's in an old Guns n' Roses video.

There are pop-culture references and *X-Files* homages everywhere you look here. And also plenty of *Star Trek* jokes, since the show's mastermind, J.J. Abrams, directed the latest *Star Trek*, which fits neatly with Nimoy's appearance. But the best thing about *Fringe* is that it never slows down long enough to put the puzzle pieces together. At one point this season, Walter asks, "You're familiar with the pliability of space-time, yes?" Peter responds, "Who isn't?" It's a great joke because of course, on *Fringe*, TV is the drug that bends the space-time continuum more than any of these chemicals could. So there's a cosmic kick in the way *Fringe* bites from every other sci-fi time-tripping opus. As Peter says, "There really isn't a point where things just can't get weirder, is there?" Not on *Fringe* there isn't. **D**



Does the new Cowboys Stadium foretell the end of America? And other burning questions from the first weeks of the NFL season By Matt Taibbi

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR ILLUSTRATION. FROM LEFT: 21 WIRE/I ANDOV; CSM/I ANDOV; "EAST WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM"/MCT/I ANDOV; MIKE STONE/REUTERS/I ANDOV; CSM/I ANDOV; JAN HALPERIN/PI/I ANDOV.



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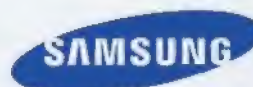


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A black and white photograph of two men walking towards the camera on a paved surface. The man on the left is wearing a light-colored, patterned button-down shirt and dark trousers. The man on the right is wearing a dark button-down shirt, dark trousers, a cowboy hat, and glasses. They are walking in front of a large, modern stadium with a curved, metallic roof structure. The stadium seating is visible in the background.

# LIVE FROM OUTER SPACE

Around the world with U2 as  
they launch the biggest tour  
of all time. By Brian Hiatt

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAM JONES







**A** N IRISH SPACESHIP HAS LANDED IN A CHICAGO football stadium, and its pilot is standing under a starless sky, barking mad orders into a microphone. "Take the astronauts' voices out," says Bono, his brogue echoing through 61,000 empty seats. "And if you could take Sinéad out of the first verse...the sonic boom needs to fade three times faster – it's not a subtle thing, it's a big change." † It's less than 24 hours before the kickoff of U2's first U.S. stadium tour since 1997 – and as far as Bono is concerned, a perfectly good time to tear apart a section of the show. He's fixated on an obscure song: "Your Blue Room," a languid, atmospheric track from the band's 1995 *Passengers* collaboration with Brian Eno. U2 have never even played it live, but tonight they're trying to transform the tune into an elaborate production number, with newly recorded vocals from Sinéad O'Connor and

video and audio shot aboard the International Space Station.

"We're lucky," says U2's manager, Paul McGuinness, watching the expensive effort unfold from a chair in front of the midfield production tent, "that they're not doing it live from space."

The actual setting is exotic enough: a four-clawed metal sci-fi cathedral that's the biggest stage in rock & roll history – large enough to be seen from planes approaching the city. It's almost a living thing, with moving ramps, constant exhalations of smoke and a constellation's worth of rotating lighting rigs. Even the video screen performs tricks, stretching up and down like a Slinky – when Bono asks for it to retract, it does so instantly, rustling with the hum of a thousand bees.

Up until now, the dress rehearsal had been going well, as the band tore through the first half of a two-hour set, playing to vacant cheap seats. The show – already polished in 24 European dates – begins with four songs in a row from the band's latest album, *No Line on the Horizon*, before diving into the back catalog. But "Your Blue Room" is a mess, the song's essence buried in astronaut chatter and other sound effects. What should be a haunting moment – a Belgian astronaut named Frank De Winne appears on the vast cylindrical video screen above the stage, reciting a spoken-word verse as he floats in zero gravity – isn't registering. "That was not a pleasant experience," Bono says, before hijacking the rehearsal to play the song again and again. His bandmates and the production team already spent an hour on the song the night before, and they know they're in for the long haul when the singer

asks for coffee from the stage. Even as they reshape the sound effects and video, Bono is writing a new bridge on the spot for the 14-year-old tune, improvising lyrics and melodies each time they run through it.

Bono's relentlessness has helped get U2 this far – while leading them off a PopMart-size cliff or two along the way. "Bono has to be Father Christmas for 70,000 people every night," says longtime show director Willie Williams, "so it's absolutely fair enough for him to lead the charge." The rest of U2 roll with their singer's tenacity with varying degrees of good humor. After they conclude a lengthy onstage huddle with Williams, drummer Larry Mullen Jr. cracks, "If it ain't broke, break it."

At stake is the biggest rock show of all time – and U2 seem entirely comfortable working at this scale. The monster stage is their workplace, as unremarkable to them as an office cubicle. But there's no denying it: Thirty-three years after four Dublin teenagers first came together in Mullen's parents' kitchen, they have reached their summit. "We're actually at the limit, the absolute limit, when you consider the economics and the practicality of transportation," says the Edge. "We're really as big as we could ever get."

The size of the tour, in some ways, is the point – an argument for the value of rock megastardom itself. In a culture as divided musically as it is politically, U2 are offering themselves up as one thing to agree upon.

"Your Blue Room" is meant to "tie the show together," as Tom Krueger, who directs the show's video content, puts it. The celestial imagery offers a reminder of the optimism about the future that the space program once represented – and the shots of Earth from space match the global perspective of a show that addresses

Associate editor BRIAN HIATT followed the recording of U2's *No Line on the Horizon* for the cover story in RS 1074.





## Across the Universe

U2, who are touring U.S. stadiums for the first time since 1997, played 24 European dates this summer.

(1) The Edge, Adam Clayton and Bono on U2's jet in August. (2) Bono at London's Wembley Stadium. (3) "I'm so particular about guitar sounds," says the Edge. "They're a large part of the identity of the song."







U2 backstage at Wembley Stadium. The band spends a few minutes alone together before every show.

AIDS in Africa and politics in Myanmar and Iran. (And the stage does look an awful lot like a spaceship – David Bowie's "Space Oddity" even plays each night as the lights dim.)

"Your Blue Room" is far from a hit, though, and hardly anyone's idea of stadium rock – in each subsequent version, the band keeps trying to make it quieter, more seductive. "It's a delicate thing," Bono says. "The problem is, the song could sink a whole section of the set if it doesn't work." He's ready to gamble and do it opening night, but the rest of the band is pushing for night two in Chicago. (The song

ends up premiering on the second night – Bono, who watched the crowd closely, says he saw faces that were "rapt and a little mystified.")

The goal, as usual, is elevation. U2 are trying to make art in football stadiums – to achieve what Bono calls "intimacy on a grand scale" – even if getting there takes \$750,000 a day of overhead: a 170-ton stage, 200 trucks and the corresponding carbon offsets, nearly 400 tour employees, more than 250 speakers, 13 video cameras, Sinéad O'Connor and various astronauts. (Red guitar, three chords and the truth sold separately.)

The tour is also the latest skirmish in U2's battle to prove that the biggest band in the world can also be the best – and that, despite relatively weak sales for *No Line on the Horizon*, their new material can stand up next to the old stuff. "What do you do if you're in a band?" the Edge says. "Do you just keep your head down and sell loads of tickets and CDs around the world? Or do you try and engage and try and do something different?"

The band takes one last shot at "Your Blue Room," and it's all starting to click: churchy washes of organ, the Edge's melancholy piano chords, spotlights on top of





the stage converging in a pyramid in the sky, the closing image of the sun rising over Earth, which leads directly into "Unknown Caller," with its opening lines "Sunshine, sunshine." Bono is relieved, and the rehearsal moves on. "One giant step," he says, "for a little man."

**O**N THEIR WAY TO CHICAGO, U2 almost run into Lil Wayne. Five minutes before the band drives up to a private airport in Newark, New Jersey – it's using New York as a home base for this leg – a shades-wearing Wayne and a small entourage

walk along the tarmac to their own private plane, unaware that they're missing a chance at a superstar summit.

The jet that U2 are using today is a loaner, while their usual one is being prepped – and it's so opulent that even Wayne might find it gauche, with couches instead of chairs, dark, polished wood walls and a private anteroom or two. I'm sitting alone in one of those cabins, waiting for take-off, when a figure appears in the doorway. "Tickets, please," Bono says. He's wearing a denim-on-denim outfit and gray shades slightly larger than his usual model. His hair is shorn brutally short on the sides –

it looks like he has it trimmed every day, and he probably does.

As he straps himself into one of the plush seats, Bono is fascinated to learn of Lil Wayne's proximity, and laughs when he's reminded of a nine-year-old U2 lyric: "The last of the rock stars/When hip-hop drove the big cars."

"We should buzz the plane by him," Bono muses, "And yell, 'We were only kidding.'"

The truth is, Bono – who is friends with Jay-Z and enlisted Will.i.am to do production work on *No Line* – relates to the bigger-is-better ethos of mainstream hip-hop a lot better than he does rock's increasing tendency toward self-ghettoization. "I love the idea of what you might call a more porous culture, where there's much more crosstown traffic," Bono says. "Jay-Z is a pioneer. He'll work with an indie band. He likes to be in places no one else has been."

"In this age of celebrity and pop stardom, maybe it's a sensible thing to question the values of being a pop star," Bono continues. "Radiohead, Pearl Jam, a lot of people, who maybe had much more sense than us, rejected it. But the thing that's suffered from that stance was that precious, pure thing, what they used to call the 45. That new Pearl Jam song ['The Fixer'] – it's brilliant. It's got that attitude, like, 'We want it.'"

## **"IN THIS AGE OF CELEBRITY," SAYS BONO, "IT'S SENSIBLE TO QUESTION THE VALUES OF BEING A POP STAR."**

The U2360° Tour makes a case for the idea of a vital mainstream, for the power of a stadium full of people taking off their earbuds to sing together. "How long can it last? I don't know," Bono says, pondering his band's increasingly singular superstar status. "Most people are content in their ghetto, and their ghettos are big. I still hold on to this old-fashioned idea of the meta-event – meta goes across, it becomes more than it is."

The show is an unlikely fusion of the two extremes of U2's tours – the technological overload of 1992-93's Zoo TV and the no-frills, bare-stage Elevation Tour.



"This is our masterpiece," says Williams, who's been planning this tour since 2006, and comes along on every date to tweak the show as it goes. "It's sort of the culmination of everything I've done with U2." On the band's plane one afternoon, he opens his MacBook and shows off iteration after iteration of architect Mark Fisher's potential designs for the stage (which was known as the Claw until the spaceship idea settled in). One file has a "wheel of style," with adjectives next to corresponding pictures of possible shapes: "domed, kinetic, spiky, pointy, archy, skeletal, wrapped."

But the real point is that from the band's perspective – which I get to see one day when I climb onstage during a soundcheck – the design elements of the stage all but disappear. What the musicians perceive instead is its openness, the in-the-round trick that gives the tour its "360" name – you can spin around and see every seat in the house. The sound system, lifted out of the crowd's way thanks to the four-pillared design, is the largest ever built for a tour – and four separate sets of speakers allow for the live equivalent of surround sound: Sound engineer Joe O'Herlihy gives Mullen's drums and Adam Clayton's bass an entire speaker column of their own, for instance.

Not incidentally, the design also means

**"LOOK,"  
SAYS BONO,  
"SOMETIMES  
OUR AUDIENCE  
ISN'T AS  
GROOVY  
AS WE'D LIKE."**

that, unlike any other stadium tour, every seat in the house can be filled – which is one reason why McGuinness says the tour is on track to be the highest-grossing of all time.

"Somebody asked us last night, 'Do you need this stuff?'" says Clayton. "And the truth is, you don't really need this stuff. But part of show business is you have to change people's perceptions, you have to find ways to make the songs touch people more, to disorientate people so they're more open to being touched."

On the Elevation Tour, one month after September 11th, 2001, U2 played three of the most emotional shows of their career at Madison Square Garden, with the audience all around them. It's that experience the band is trying to replicate, on a larger scale. "What happened was that the au-

dience were looking at each other," Bono says. "Saying, 'We've come through this.' That's the magic trick. The rabbit out of the hat is to make the audience the star of the show."

**A** MONTH BEFORE CHICAGO, U2 are 17 dates deep into their European tour, and the Edge has exactly 10 minutes to play tourist in its most exotic port of call. He climbs into the back of a van outside his hotel for a drive through Croatia's capital, Zagreb, to Maksimir Stadium, home of the nation's greatest soccer team, and of tonight's U2 concert. "This will be my Zagreb experience," says the Edge, a smile crinkling the corners of his goatee. "It's the one thing that's strange about touring – you don't get to see things." As usual, he's dressed in

black – T-shirt with a geometric pattern on it, jeans, leather Converse, head-covering cap. On a silver chain around his neck hangs a razor blade with the words DON'T MESS CARVED into it.

It's U2's first-ever show in Zagreb, and the first time they've played in the once war-ravaged region since a dramatic Sarajevo show in 1997. Edge settles into his black leather seat and begins snapping pictures out the window. The sights of the now-flourishing city rush by: a statue of medieval king Tomislav on a horse; posters for recent concerts by Patti Smith and Dale Watson; clotheslines between buildings (they remind Edge of his Dublin childhood: "I remember clothespegs. Who buys clothespegs anymore?"); streetcars; and, to his amusement, a vast metal structure poking past the top of a dowdy sports sta-







U2's 360-degree stage – the biggest set ever built – weighs 170 tons and requires 120 trucks to transport it.

dium. “The view I got, it looks like just another building,” Edge says.

The van pulls into the venue’s loading dock, beside giant white tents set up for production offices and catering – it looks like a good-size festival is in town. Shaking hands as he goes, Edge walks through a concrete corridor, steps over thick, bound electrical cords and climbs the clanking steel stairs that lead to the top of U2’s stage, which looks almost comically garish in the daylight. He greets Dallas Schoo, his genial guitar tech, straps on the first of a series of guitars and begins a one-man soundcheck.

Schoo hands Edge a Rickenbacker, and he plays the intro of “Mysterious Ways” – which, upon close observation, consists merely of one seventh-fret barre chord, a couple of rhythmic scratches and two notes

– but it’s enough to induce goose bumps when you hear that exact squelchy, sexy sound from *Achtung Baby* come directly out of Edge’s four modest amplifiers. As Edge begins adjusting his guitar’s settings and punching the 36 buttons on the pedal board at his feet, Schoo whips out a digital camera and photographs the positions of the knobs and switches on the guitar.

To give him freedom to roam the vast expanse of the stage, Edge is using a Garth Brooks-style headset mike for his backing vocals and also allowing Schoo to control his guitar effects – the tech has a duplicate of Edge’s board under the stage.

But Edge keeps wandering back to his own board at stage right, tweaking settings. It’s not unusual, Schoo says with some awe, for Edge to create new combinations of effects mid-song in front of a full

stadium, and then hit “save” to create a preset. “I’m so particular about guitar sounds, because it is the identity of the song in many cases,” Edge says. He half-grins, half-winces at this uncharacteristic moment of immodesty, and revises himself: “a *large part* of the identity of the song.”

**W**HETHER IT’S ZAGREB, London or Chicago, every show begins roughly the same way: a segment of “Kingdom of Your Love” – an unreleased U2 song with a pulsing beat and choral vocals – blares over the PA, and Mullen struts out onstage alone. A single spotlight shines on the drummer while he plays an extended whirl of tom-toms, snare and cymbal that serves as an intro to the *No Line* track “Breathe,” a sort of power waltz



Bono onstage in London. "He has to be Father Christmas for 70,000 people every night," says Willie Williams, U2's show director.



with Dylanesque verses and a chorus that's as U2-anthem as it gets. Mullen's bandmates join him one by one – Bono pops up last, yanking his mike stand back as if it's a crank that makes the band go.

"It's amazing to walk out when the audience is expecting Bono," says Mullen, over a dinner of rice and vegetables at a picnic table outside the catering tent before one of the Zagreb shows. "I've been waiting 35 years for the drum solo. Wouldn't want to be holding my breath, but this is the closest thing."

It's not the guy that fans expect to see first onstage – and not the song they might be waiting for, either. After "Breathe," there are three songs in a row from *No Line* (the title track, "Get On Your Boots" and "Magnificent") – and three more tunes from the album show up, including the epic ballad "Moment of Surrender" as a show-closer. The emphasis on the new stuff is all the more brave when you consider that *No Line on the Horizon* has barely moved a million copies in the U.S. – placing it among the lowest-selling U2 albums – and that the album has thus far failed to produce a hit single. "I walk out and sing 'Breathe' every night to a lot of people who don't know it," says Bono. "I'm a performer – I'm not going to hang on to a song that doesn't communicate and add up to

something. They're great songs live, and I think it's a great album. I think it will be seen as 'Gosh, one of their more challenging albums.'"

On the way to Chicago, though, Clayton worries that Americans might be more impatient than Europeans: "I'm a little concerned about whether or not we can open with four new songs," he says. "That might be tricky." And after the second show in Chicago, Bono notes that the show "still needs a little more toasting." So by the second week of the U.S. leg, U2 try taking "Breathe" out of the set list, kicking off with "Magnificent" instead and reducing the number of new songs at the beginning of the show to three. ("What strikes me about them is they'll hold on to an idea," says video director Krueger, "until they find a better one.")

The one new song every crowd knows is *No Line*'s first single, "Get On Your Boots" – which the band plays in a more straightforward, harder-rocking arrangement live, stripping it of its electronic elements. U2 love playing the song, but three out of four members now acknowledge that it was the wrong choice for a first single (Edge continues to defend it). "Interestingly, it's going off live," says Clayton. "But I think probably what happened was it's a common U2 problem. I think we probably worked on

it and worked on it and worked on it, and instead of executing one idea well, I think we had probably five ideas in the song, and it just confused people. They weren't sure what they were hearing."

Bono has his own ideas. "Look, sometimes our audience isn't as groovy as we'd like," he says with a smile. "'Get On Your Boots,' as it was released, is a sort of cross-over, half-club, half-indie-rock record. People are not sure about the club side of U2. They want 'Vertigo.' And when we did this the last time – with 'Discothèque,' from *Pop*, they didn't like it either."

But in what must be considered an act of defiance, the band is including one of its clubbiest moments ever in the current show – playing its recent single, the midtempo pop tune "I'll Go Crazy If I Don't Go Crazy Tonight," in a nearly unrecognizable LCD Soundsystem-style remix, complete with whimsical video of the band members bopping their heads to the beat. Bono had decided the show needed the song during rehearsals in Barcelona, after walking to the top of the stadium and deciding that there had to be a musical moment as futuristic as the stage. Even Mullen, traditionally resistant to such moves, enjoys the remix – not least because it gives him a chance to roam the stage with a hand drum while an electronic beat takes over. And Clay-



ton particularly loves it, because it's based around a sample of a piece of his bass part that his bandmates had almost vetoed as too "twiddly."

The band was apprehensive about debuting this version in front of its less groovy American fans. On the plane from Zagreb, Mullen and Bono discuss the possibility of starting with the standard arrangement of the song and then moving to the remix, before the drummer turns to me. "It would really help," Mullen says, "if you wrote that it's one of the highlights of the show." They end up not changing a thing for the U.S., and in Chicago, the "Crazy Tonight" remix is, in fact, one of the highlights of the show, with the Edge wildly pogoing and Bono singing snippets of Sly Stone.

In the most jarring transition of the night, "Crazy Tonight" moves directly into "Sunday Bloody Sunday," which the group has effectively re-contextualized by adding footage from this summer's Iranian protests. ("We tried just using green backgrounds," says the Edge, "but it was too subtle. People thought, 'Ireland.'") Images from Iran begin to appear on the screen as Bono sings the final chorus of "Crazy":

"We get to carry each other," he sings, tweaking the lyrics slightly to lend the lines some more syncopation: "Whether you're my sister, or whether you're my brother."

Moments later, as the Edge turns the chord progression into a keening cry and the rhythm section churns the song into something too propulsive to be a ballad, Bono has the house lights turned out and asks the crowd to take out their cellphones – a concert cliché that becomes something much larger: "Turn this place into a bigger universe," he says, and then, maybe surprising himself, starts to yell, "Turn on your own light! Your own light!" The lights blaze, a miniature galaxy of souls. The show achieves liftoff.

Bono had carefully introduced "One": "This next song means a lot of different things to a lot of different people," he said, as a Croatian translation appeared on the video screen. "Tonight we want to play it for everyone in this region who's had their warm hearts broken by cold ideas." There was a hush as the crowd took in the words, then an explosion of applause.

The next night, Bono is still thinking about those moments. "The Balkans in-

pers and eating dinner, and their two young sons, who are both curled up for naps after sprinting about backstage for most of the night while their dad did the same onstage.

"Love is a big word to be throwing around in these parts," Bono continues, building up steam, talking over the engine noise. "Carrying the badge of non-violence, at first glance, looks well on an Irishman, but we lived 100 miles from troubles. So in a way, it was no great act of courage for us to drain the flag of color and preach nonviolence.

"It's a completely different thing if you live in Croatia or if you live in the western Balkans. These people have, within recent memory, seen just what a thin skin of civilization we had in the late 20th century. We had just made *Achtung Baby* and *Zooropa* – and people weren't only not loving their neighbors, they were torturing their neighbors. They were attaching electrical cables to their private parts and making them squeal. I would not be at all offended if somebody were to say, 'How the fuck dare you come and speak about love?'"

## **"WE'RE AT THE LIMIT IN TERMS OF ECONOMICS AND PRACTICALITY," SAYS THE EDGE.**

### **"WE'RE REALLY AS BIG AS WE COULD EVER GET."**

"It's not a hill/It's a mountain/As we start out the climb."

At that point, as Bono sees it, the second and more political section of the show begins. "The first act is a sort of personal narrative, about overcoming obstacles," he says. "Suddenly, from this song about hedonism and self-destruction...you're on the streets of Tehran. It's not a hill, it's a mountain/As we start out the climb – your personal odyssey is thrown into harsh relief with what's going on in the outside world. Maybe this is how I've sorted my life – all the saddest people I knew were people focused on their own well-being. 'I, I, I, I, I, me, me, me, me.' The way I found a route out of depression, the way I found a route out of idiocy, has been the harsh juxtaposition of other lives, be they around me or in the wider world. I love that moment in the show – I really understand that feeling."

**T**HE 360° TOUR'S SOUND SYSTEM may be the loudest ever built – but in a surge of voices tonight in Zagreb, the crowd is somehow almost drowning it out. "Love is a temple," they sing, latching on to the line as if it's from their national anthem, "love the higher law." Standing at center stage, holding a green guitar, Bono repeats the line, his own voice shaking with sudden emo-


tion. "We get to carry each other," he sings, tweaking the lyrics slightly to lend the lines some more syncopation: "Whether you're my sister, or whether you're my brother." Moments later, as the Edge turns the chord progression into a keening cry and the rhythm section churns the song into something too propulsive to be a ballad, Bono has the house lights turned out and asks the crowd to take out their cellphones – a concert cliché that becomes something much larger: "Turn this place into a bigger universe," he says, and then, maybe surprising himself, starts to yell, "Turn on your own light! Your own light!" The lights blaze, a miniature galaxy of souls. The show achieves liftoff.

Bono had carefully introduced "One": "This next song means a lot of different things to a lot of different people," he said, as a Croatian translation appeared on the video screen. "Tonight we want to play it for everyone in this region who's had their warm hearts broken by cold ideas." There was a hush as the crowd took in the words, then an explosion of applause.

The next night, Bono is still thinking about those moments. "The Balkans in-

Bono is wearing a black T-shirt and jeans, and he's at peak tour fitness, looking a few pounds lighter than he did in January. He doesn't drink much on the road anymore, but he's not exactly an ascetic. (Later, he sheepishly admits to "an Elvis moment": stopping a motorcade rushing out of Chicago so he could get a Big Mac.) Underneath the table, his pale feet are bare – he's kicked off an extremely un-rock & roll pair of sandals.

He reaches an unexpected conclusion, making the case that his band, among the few rock superstars without Woodstock-era roots, is still driven by the best ideas of that time. In the end, maybe the spaceship is a time machine – and the destination is 1967. "You think of the Beatles and you think of 'All You Need Is Love,' and that burst of ideas, that renaissance that was the Sixties," he says. "The core of it was this idea of love, out of which came the women's movement, gay movement, anti-war movement. It was all based on this simple Judeo-Christian idea, the philosophy of having to love your neighbor, it not being advice, it being an order, an edict: 'Love your neighbor.'"

Bono smiles for the first time since he started talking about torture and hate. "It's a strange thing," he says, "when you come out with this stuff at a rock show." 









## CLOSE-UP

# The Rise of a Redneck Diva

**M**IRANDA LAM-

bert is the kind of girl who doesn't care if she scares the crap out of you. On her last big single, she went all Charles Bronson on an ex-boyfriend, singing, "I'm gonna show him what a little girl's made of: gunpowder and lead." Now she's taking that don't-fuck-with-me attitude nationwide. With her new album, *Revolution*, Lambert, 25, busts up the town-meeting slickness of mainstream Nashville. On a cover of Fred Eaglesmith's "Time to Get a Gun," she sings about arming yourself in the face of car thieves and "government men" coming by your back door.

In true shitkicking fashion, Lambert moves easily from threats to jokes to dreams of packing up her Airstream and heading off the grid. Think the Dixie Chicks meet Rambo: Hard as it is for the Michael Moore fans of the world to admit, it's the best country album of the year.

Lambert got her first break on the show *Nashville Star* in 2003, but her good-ol'-boy bona fides run deep. She grew up in Texas, where her father was a police officer and private investigator – he worked for Paula Jones during her sexual-harassment lawsuit against Bill Clinton. Lambert was a daddy's girl who insisted on tagging along with her father and brother on hunting trips. "I got my

**GUNPOWDER  
AND LEAD**  
Miranda Lambert  
in Nashville in  
September. She  
sometimes uses  
a rifle butt as a  
mike stand.

first BB gun at four years old," she says. "The first time we harvested a deer, my dad took the blood and rubbed it on my cheeks. Now I'm addicted." These days she loads her shotgun with her country-hunk boyfriend, singer Blake Shelton. "In the fall we hunt, in the summer we fish," says Shelton. "Drinking happens year-round."

"Time to Get a Gun" is just a sign of the times, claims Lambert, not a call to arms. "Where I'm from, there's an uncertain feeling that nobody knows what's going to happen with our country because the economy is so terrible," she says. "People feel like buying a gun is their last chance to protect themselves."

That includes Lambert: "The other day, I went into a Bass Pro Shop and came out with a pistol and a bikini," she says. "Now that's redneck!" Adds Shelton, "Some guys trade guns and knives with their buddies. I do that with my girlfriend."

MELISSA MAERZ

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID McCLISTER



# WALL STREET'S NAKED SWINDLE

A scheme to flood the market with counterfeit stocks helped kill Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers – and the feds have yet to bust the culprits **By Matt Taibbi**

ON TUESDAY, MARCH 11TH, 2008, somebody – nobody knows who – made one of the craziest bets Wall Street has ever seen. The mystery figure spent \$1.7 million on a series of options, gambling that shares in the venerable investment bank Bear Stearns would lose more than half their value in nine days or less. It was madness – “like buying 1.7 million lottery tickets,” according to one financial analyst.

But what’s even crazier is that the bet paid.

At the close of business that afternoon, Bear Stearns was trading at \$62.97. At that point, whoever made the gamble owned the right to sell huge bundles of Bear stock, at \$30 and \$25, on or before March 20th. In order for the bet to pay, Bear would have to fall harder and faster than any Wall Street brokerage in history.

The very next day, March 12th, Bear went into free fall. By the end of the week, the firm had lost virtually all of its cash and was clinging to promises of state aid; by the weekend, it was being knocked to its knees by the Fed and the Treasury, and forced at the barrel of a shotgun to sell itself to JPMorgan Chase (which had

been given \$29 billion in public money to marry its hunchbacked new bride) at the humiliating price of . . . \$2 a share. Whoever bought those options on March 11th woke up on the morning of March 17th having made 159 times his money, or roughly \$270 million. This trader was either the luckiest guy in the world, the smartest son of a bitch ever or . . .

Or what? That this was a brazen case of insider manipulation was so obvious that even Sen. Chris Dodd, chairman of the pillow-soft-touch Senate Banking Committee, couldn’t help but remark on it a few weeks later, when questioning Christopher Cox, the then-chief of the Securities and Exchange Commission. “I would hope that you’re looking at this,” Dodd said. “This kind of spike must have triggered some sort of bells and whistles at the SEC. This goes beyond rumors.”

Cox nodded sternly and promised, yes, he would look into it. What actually happened is another matter. Although the SEC issued more than 50 subpoenas to Wall Street firms, it has yet to identify the mysterious trader who somehow seemed to know in advance that one of the five largest investment banks in America was going to completely tank in a matter of days. “I’ve seen







the SEC send agents overseas in a simple insider-trading case to investigate profits of maybe \$2,000," says Brent Baker, a former senior counsel for the commission. "But they did nothing to stop this."

The SEC's halfhearted oversight didn't go unnoticed by the market. Six months after Bear was eaten by predators, virtually the same scenario repeated itself in the case of Lehman Brothers – another top-five investment bank that in September 2008 was vaporized in an obvious case of market manipulation. From there, the financial crisis was on, and the global economy went into full-blown crater mode.

Like all the great merchants of the bubble economy, Bear and Lehman were leveraged to the hilt and vulnerable to collapse. Many of the methods that outsiders

America's Charlie Brown," endlessly creating new products to lure the great herd of unwitting investors into whatever tawdry greed-bubble is being spun at the moment: Come kick the football again, only this time we'll call it the Internet, real estate, oil futures. Wall Street has turned the economy into a giant asset-stripping scheme, one whose purpose is to suck the last bits of meat from the carcass of the middle class.

What really happened to Bear and Lehman is that an economic drought temporarily left the hyenas without any more middle-class victims – and so they started eating each other, using the exact same schemes they had been using for years to fleece the rest of the country. And in the forensic footprint left by those kills, we can

conquerors, bestowing his papal blessing on a new era of robbery.

To the rest of the world, the brazenness of the theft – coupled with the conspicuousness of the government's inaction – clearly demonstrates that the American capital markets are a crime in progress. To those of us who actually live here, however, the news is even worse. We're in a place we haven't been since the Depression: Our economy is so completely fucked, the rich are running out of things to steal.

IF YOU SQUINT HARD ENOUGH, you can see that the derivative-driven economy of the past decade has always, in a way, been about counterfeiting. At their most basic level, innovations like the ones that trig-



used to knock them over were mostly legal: Credit markers were pulled, rumors were spread through the media, and legitimate short-sellers pressured the stock price down. But when Bear and Lehman made their final leap off the cliff of history, both undeniably got a push – especially in the form of a flat-out counterfeiting scheme called *naked short-selling*.

That this particular scam played such a prominent role in the demise of the two firms was supremely ironic. After all, the boom that had ballooned both companies to fantastic heights was basically a counterfeit economy, a mountain of paste that Wall Street had built to replace the legitimate business it no longer had. By the middle of the Bush years, the great investment banks like Bear and Lehman no longer made their money financing real businesses and creating jobs. Instead, Wall Street now serves, in the words of one former investment executive, as "Lucy to

see for the first time exactly how the scam worked – and how completely even the government regulators who are supposed to protect us have given up trying to stop it.

This was a brokered bloodletting, one in which the power of the state was used to help effect a monstrous consolidation of financial and political power. Heading into 2008, there were five major investment banks in the United States: Bear, Lehman, Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs. Today only Morgan Stanley and Goldman survive as independent firms, perched atop a restructured Wall Street hierarchy. And while the rest of the civilized world responded to last year's catastrophes with sweeping measures to rein in the corruption in their financial sectors, the United States invited the wolves into the government, with the popular new president, Barack Obama – elected amid promises to clean up the mess – filling his administration with Bear's and Lehman's

gered the global collapse – credit-default swaps and collateralized debt obligations – were employed for the primary purpose of synthesizing out of thin air those revenue flows that our dying industrial economy was no longer pumping into the financial bloodstream. The basic concept in almost every case was the same: replacing hard assets with complex formulas that, once unwound, would prove to be backed by promises and IOUs instead of real stuff. Credit-default swaps enabled banks to lend more money without having the cash to cover potential defaults; one type of CDO let Wall Street issue mortgage-backed bonds that were backed not by actual monthly mortgage payments made by real human beings, but by the wild promises of other irresponsible lenders. They even called the thing a *synthetic* CDO – a derivative contract filled with derivative contracts – and nobody laughed. The whole economy was a fake.



For most of this decade, nobody rocked that fake economy – especially the faux housing market – better than Bear Stearns. In 2004, Bear had been one of five investment banks to ask the SEC for a relaxation of lending restrictions that required it to possess \$1 for every \$12 it lent out; as a result, Bear's debt-to-equity ratio soared to a staggering 33-1. The bank used much of that leverage to issue mountains of mortgage-backed securities, essentially borrowing its way to a booming mortgage business that helped drive its share price to a high of \$172 in early 2007.

But that summer, Bear started to crater. Two of its hedge funds that were heavily invested in mortgage-backed deals imploded in June and July, forcing the credit-raters at Standard & Poor's to cut its outlook on Bear from stable to negative. The company survived through the winter – in part by jettisoning its dipshit CEO, Jimmy Cayne, a dithering, weed-smoking septuagenarian who was spotted at a bridge tournament

Citigroup; Stephen Schwarzman of the Blackstone Group; and several hedge-fund chiefs, including Kenneth Griffin of Citadel Investment Group.

The meeting was never announced publicly. In fact, it was discovered only by accident, when a reporter from Bloomberg filed a request under the Freedom of Information Act and came across a mention of it in Bernanke's schedule. *ROLLING STONE* has since contacted every major attendee, and all declined to comment on what was discussed at the meeting. "The ground rules of the lunch were of confidentiality," says a spokesman for Morgan Stanley. "Blackstone has no comment," says a spokesman for Schwarzman. Rubin declined a request for an interview, Fuld's people didn't return calls, and Goldman refused to talk about the closed-door session. The New York Fed said the meeting, which had been scheduled weeks earlier, was simply business as usual: "Such informal, small group sessions can provide a valuable means to

and hedge funds that held cash in Bear's accounts yanked it out in mass quantities (making it harder for the firm to meet its credit payments) and took out credit-default swaps against Bear (making public bets that the firm was going to tank). At the same time, Bear was blindsided by an avalanche of "novation requests" – efforts by worried creditors to sell off the debts that Bear owed them to other Wall Street firms, who would then be responsible for collecting the money. By the afternoon of March 11th, two rival investment firms – Credit Suisse and Goldman Sachs – were so swamped by novation requests for Bear's debt that they temporarily stopped accepting them, signaling the market that they had grave doubts about Bear.

All of these tactics were elements that had often been seen in a kind of scam known as a "bear raid" that small-scale stock manipulators had been using against smaller companies for years. But the most damning thing the attack on Bear had in

## AN ECONOMIC DROUGHT temporarily left the hyenas without any middle-class victims – so they started eating each other.

during the crisis – but by March 2008, it was almost wholly dependent on a network of creditors who supplied it with billions in rolling daily loans to keep its doors open. If ever there was a major company ripe to be assassinated by market manipulators, it was Bear Stearns in 2008.

Then, on March 11th – around the same time that mystery Nostradamus was betting \$1.7 million that Bear was about to collapse – a curious thing happened that attracted virtually no notice on Wall Street. On that day, a meeting was held at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York that was brokered by Fed chief Ben Bernanke and then-New York Fed president Timothy Geithner. The luncheon included virtually everyone who was anyone on Wall Street – except for Bear Stearns.

Bear, in fact, was the only major investment bank *not* represented at the meeting, whose list of participants reads like a Barzini-Tattaglia meeting of the Five Families. In attendance were Jamie Dimon from JPMorgan Chase, Lloyd Blankfein from Goldman Sachs, James Gorman from Morgan Stanley, Richard Fuld from Lehman Brothers and John Thain, the big-spending office redecorator still heading the not-yet-fully-destroyed Merrill Lynch. Also present were old Clinton hand Robert Rubin, who represented

learn about market functioning from people with firsthand knowledge."

So what did happen at that meeting? There's no evidence that Bernanke and Geithner called the confidential session to discuss Bear's troubles, let alone how to carve up the bank's spoils. It's possible that one of them made an impolitic comment about Bear during a meeting held for other reasons, inadvertently fueling a run on the bank. What's impossible to believe is the bullshit version that Geithner and Bernanke later told Congress. The month after Bear's collapse, both men testified before the Senate that they only learned how dire the firm's liquidity problems were on Thursday, March 13th – despite the fact that rumors of Bear's troubles had begun as early as that Monday and both men had met in person with every key player on Wall Street that Tuesday. This is a little like saying you spent the afternoon of September 12th, 2001, in the Oval Office, but didn't hear about the Twin Towers falling until September 14th.

Given the Fed's cloak of confidentiality, we simply don't know what happened at the meeting. But what we do know is that from the moment it ended, the run on Bear was on, and every major player on Wall Street with ties to Bear started pulling IV tubes out of the patient's arm. Banks, brokers

common with these earlier manipulations was the employment of a type of counterfeiting scheme called naked short-selling. From the moment the confidential meeting at the Fed ended on March 11th, Bear became the target of this ostensibly illegal practice – and the companies widely rumored to be behind the assault were in that room. Given that the SEC has failed to identify who was behind the raid, Wall Street insiders were left with nothing to trade but gossip. According to the former head of Bear's mortgage business, Tom Marano, the rumors within Bear itself that week centered around Citadel and Goldman. Both firms were later subpoenaed by the SEC as part of its investigation into market manipulation – and the CEOs of both Bear and Lehman were so suspicious that they reportedly contacted Blankfein to ask whether his firm was involved in the scam. (A Goldman spokesman denied any wrongdoing, telling reporters it was "rigorous about conducting business as usual.")

**T**HE ROOTS OF SHORT-SELLING date back to 1973, when Wall Street went to a virtually paperless system for trading stocks. Before then, if you wanted to sell shares you owned in Awesome Company X, you and the buyer



would verbally agree to the deal through a broker. The buyer would take legal ownership of the shares, but only later would the broker deliver the actual, physical shares to the buyer, using an absurd, *Brazil*-style network of runners who carried paper shares from one place to another – a preposterous system that threatened to cripple trading altogether.

To deal with the problem, Wall Street established a kind of giant financial septic tank called the Depository Trust Company. Privately owned by a consortium of brokers and banks, the DTC centralizes and maintains all records of stock transactions. Now, instead of being schlepped back and forth across Manhattan by messengers on bikes, almost all physical shares of stock remain permanently at the DTC. When one broker sells shares to another, the trust company “delivers” the shares simply by making a change in its records.

This new electronic system spurred an explosion of financial innovation. One practice that had been little used before but now began to be employed with great popularity was short-selling, a perfectly legal type of transaction that allows investors to bet against a stock. The basic premise of a normal short sale is easy to follow. Say you’re a hedge-fund manager, and you want to bet against the stock of a company – let’s call it Wounded Gazelle International (WGI). What you do is go out on the market and find someone – often a brokerage house like Goldman Sachs – who has shares in that stock and is willing to lend you some. So you go to Goldman on a Monday morning, and you borrow 1,000 shares in Wounded Gazelle, which that day happens to be trading at \$10.

Now you take those 1,000 borrowed shares, and you sell them on the open market at \$10, which leaves you with \$10,000 in cash. You then take that \$10,000, and you wait. A week later, surveillance tapes of Wounded’s CEO having sex with a woodchuck in a Burger King bathroom appear on CNBC. Awash in scandal, the firm’s share price tumbles to 3½. So you go out on the market and buy back those 1,000 shares of WGI – only now it costs you only \$3,500 to do so. You then return

the shares to Goldman Sachs, at which point your interest in WGI ends. By betting against or “shorting” the company, you’ve made a profit of \$6,500.

It’s important to point out that not only is normal short-selling completely legal, it can also be socially beneficial. By incentivizing Wall Street players to sniff out inefficient or corrupt companies and bet against them, short-selling acts as a sort of policing system; legal short-sellers have been instrumental in helping expose firms like Enron and WorldCom. The problem is, the new paperless system instituted by the DTC opened up a giant loophole for those eager to game the market. Under the old system, would-

allowed hedge funds to sell those stocks and deliver a kind of IOU instead of the actual share to the buyer. When a share of stock is sold but never delivered, it’s called a “fail” or a “fail to deliver” – and there was no law or regulation in place that prevented it. It’s exactly what it sounds like: a loophole legalizing the counterfeiting of stock. In place of real stock, the system could become infected with “fails” – phantom IOU shares – instead of real assets.

If you own stock that pays a dividend, you can even look at your dividend check to see if your shares are real. If you see a line that says “PIL” – meaning “Payment in Lieu” of dividends – your shares were never actually delivered to you when you bought the stock. The mere fact that you’re even getting this money is evidence of the crime: This counterfeiting scheme is so profitable for the hedge funds, banks and brokers involved that they are willing to pay “dividends” for shares that do not exist. “They’re making the payments without complaint,” says Susanne Trimboth, an economist who worked at the Depository Trust Company. “So they’re making the money somewhere else.”

Trimboth was one of the first people to notice the problem. In 1993, she was approached by a group of corporate transfer agents who had a complaint. Transfer agents are the people who keep track of who owns shares in corporations, for the purposes of voting in corporate elections. “What the transfer agents saw, when corporate votes came up, was that they were getting more votes than there were shares,” says Trimboth. In other words, transfer agents representing a corporation that had, say, 1 million shares outstanding would report a vote on new board members in which 1.3 million votes were cast – a seeming impossibility.

Analyzing the problem, Trimboth came to an ugly conclusion: The fact that short-sellers do not have to deliver their shares made it possible for two people at once to think they own a stock. Evil Hedge Fund X borrows 100 shares from Unwitting Schmuck A, and sells them to Unwitting Schmuck B, who never actually receives that stock: In this scenario, both Schmucks will appear to have full voting rights. “There’s no accounting for share ownership around short sales,” Trimboth



be short-sellers had to physically borrow actual paper shares before they could execute a short sale. In other words, you had to actually have stock before you could sell it. But under the new system, a short-seller only had to make a good-faith effort to “locate” the stock he wanted to borrow, which usually amounts to little more than a conversation with a broker:

**EVIL HEDGE FUND:** I want to short IBM. Do you have a million shares I can borrow?

**CORRUPT BROKER** [*not checking, playing Tetris*]: Uh, yeah, whatever. Go ahead and sell.

There was nothing to prevent that broker – let’s say he has only a million shares of IBM total – from making the same promise to five different hedge funds. And not only could brokers lend stocks they never had, another loophole in the system

Contributing editor MATT TAIBBI wrote about Goldman Sachs in “The Great American Bubble Machine” [RS 1082/3].



says. "And because of that, there are multiple owners assigned to one share."

Trimbath's observation would prove prophetic. In 2005, a trade group called the Securities Transfer Association analyzed 341 shareholder votes taken that year – and found evidence of over-voting in *every single one*. Experts in the field complain that the system makes corporate-election fraud a comically simple thing to achieve: In a process known as "empty voting," anyone can influence any corporate election simply by borrowing great masses of shares shortly before an important merger or board election, exercising their voting rights, then returning the shares right after the vote is over. hilariously, because you're only borrowing the shares and not buying them, you can effectively "buy" a corporate election for free.

Back in 1993, over-voting might have seemed a mere curiosity, the result not of fraud but of innocent bookkeeping errors. But Trimbath realized the broader impli-

**H**ERE'S HOW NAKED SHORT-selling works: Imagine you travel to a small foreign island on vacation. Instead of going to an exchange office in your hotel to turn your dollars into Island Rubles, the country instead gives you a small printing press and makes you a deal: Print as many Island Rubles as you like, then on the way out of the country you can settle your account. So you take your printing press, print out gigantic quantities of Rubles and start buying goods and services. Before long, the cash you've churned out floods the market, and the currency's value plummets. Do this long enough and you'll crack the currency entirely; the loaf of bread that cost the equivalent of one American dollar the day you arrived now costs less than a cent.

With prices completely depressed, you keep printing money and buy everything of value – homes, cars, priceless works of art. You then load it all into a cargo ship and

to cover that – but the price of the stock would drop to a penny."

In 2005, complaints from investors about naked short-selling finally prompted the SEC to try to curb the scam. A new rule called Regulation SHO, known as "Reg SHO" for short, established a series of guidelines designed, in theory, to prevent traders from selling stock and then failing to deliver it to the buyer. "Intentionally failing to deliver stock," then-SEC chief Christopher Cox noted, "is market manipulation that is clearly violative of the federal securities laws." But thanks to lobbying by hedge funds and brokers, the new rule included no financial penalties for violators and no real enforcement mechanism. Instead, it merely created a thing called the "threshold list," requiring short-sellers to close out their positions in any company where the amount of "fails to deliver" exceeded 10,000 shares for more than 13 days. In other words, if counterfeiters got caught selling a chunk of phantom

## THANKS TO A LOOPHOLE, brokers could legally counterfeit stock, promising the same shares to five different hedge funds.

cation: Just as the lack of hard rules forcing short-sellers to deliver shares makes it possible for unscrupulous traders to manipulate a corporate vote, it could also enable them to manipulate the price of a stock by selling large quantities of shares they didn't possess. She warned her bosses that this crack in the system made the specter of organized counterfeiting a real possibility.

"I personally went to senior management at DTC in 1993 and presented them with this issue," she recalls. "And their attitude was, 'We spill more than that.'" In other words, the problem represented such a small percentage of the assets handled annually by the DTC – as much as \$1.8 quadrillion in any given year, roughly 30 times the GDP of the entire planet – that it wasn't worth worrying about.

It wasn't until 10 years later, when Trimbath had a chance meeting with a lawyer representing a company that had been battered by short-sellers, that she realized someone outside the DTC had seized control of a financial weapon of mass destruction. "It was like someone figured out how to aim and fire the Death Star in *Star Wars*," she says. What they "figured out," Trimbath realized, was an early version of the naked-shorting scam that would help take down Bear and Lehman.

head home. On the way out of the country, you have to settle your account with the currency office. But the Island Rubles you printed are now worthless, so it takes just a handful of U.S. dollars to settle your debt. Arriving home with your cargo ship, you sell all the island riches you bought at a discount and make a fortune.

This is the basic outline for how to seize the assets of a publicly traded company using counterfeit stock. What naked short-sellers do is sell large quantities of stock they don't actually have, flooding the market with "phantom" shares that, just like those Island Rubles, depress a company's share price by making the shares less scarce and therefore less valuable.

The first documented cases of this scam involved small-time boiler-room grifters. In the late 1990s, not long after Trimbath warned her bosses about the problem, a trader named John Fiero executed a series of "bear raids" on small companies. First he sold shares he didn't possess in huge quantities and fomented negative rumors about a company; then, in a classic shakedown, he approached the firm with offers to desist – if they'd sell him stock at a discount. "He would press a button and enter a trade for half a million shares," says Brent Baker, the SEC official who busted Fiero. "He didn't have the stock

shares in a firm for two straight weeks, they were no longer allowed to counterfeit the stock.

A nice, if timid idea – except that it's completely meaningless. Not only has there been virtually no enforcement of the rule, but the SEC doesn't even bother to track who is targeting companies with failed trades. As a result, many stocks attacked by naked short-sellers spent years on the threshold list, including Krispy Kreme, Martha Stewart and Overstock.com.

"We were actually on it for 668 consecutive days," says Patrick Byrne, the CEO of Overstock, who became a much-ridiculed pariah on Wall Street for his lobbying against naked short-selling. At one point, investors claimed ownership of nearly 42 million shares in Overstock – even though fewer than 24 million shares in the company had actually been issued.

Byrne is not an easy person for anyone with any kind of achievement neuroses to like. He is young, good-looking, has shitloads of money, speaks fluent Chinese, holds a doctorate in philosophy and spent his youth playing hooky from high school and getting business tips from the likes of Warren Buffett. But because of his fight against naked short-selling, he has been turbofragged by the mainstream media as a tinfoil-hat lunatic; one story in the *New*



*York Post* featured a picture of Byrne with a flying saucer coming out of his head.

Nonetheless, Byrne's howlings about naked short-selling look extremely prescient in light of what happened to Bear and Lehman. Over the past four years, Byrne has outlined the parameters of a naked-shorting scam that always includes some combination of the following elements: negative rumors planted in the financial press, the flooding of the market with enormous quantities of undelivered shares, absurdly high trading volumes and the prolonged appearance of the targeted company on the Reg SHO list.

In January 2005 – at the exact moment Reg SHO was launched – Byrne's own company was trading above \$65 a share, and the number of failed trades in circulation was virtually nil. By March 2006, however, Overstock was down to \$28 a share, and Reg SHO data indicated an explosion of failed trades – nearly 4 million undelivered shares on some days. At those moments, in other words, nearly a fifth of all Overstock shares were fake.

"This really isn't about my company," Byrne says. "I mean, I've made my money. My initial concern, of course, was with Overstock. But the more I learned about this, the more my real worry became 'Jesus, what are the implications for the system?' And given what happened to Bear and Lehman last year, I think we ended up seeing what some of those implications are."

**B**EAR STEARNS WASN'T THE kind of company that had a problem with naked short-selling. Before March 11th, 2008, there had never been a period in which significant quantities of Bear stock had been sold and then not delivered, and the company had never shown up on the Reg SHO list. But beginning on March 12th – the day after the Fed meeting that failed to include Bear, and the mysterious purchase of the options betting on the firm's imminent collapse – the number of counterfeit shares in Bear skyrocketed.

The best way to grasp what happened is to look at the data: On Tuesday, March 11th, there were 201,768 shares of Bear that had failed to deliver. The very next day, the number of phantom shares leaped to 1.2 million. By the close of trading that

Friday, the number passed 2 million – and when the market reopened the following Monday, it soared to 13.7 million. In less than a week, the number of counterfeit shares in Bear had jumped nearly seventyfold.

The giant numbers of undelivered shares over the course of that week amounted to one of the most blatant cases of stock manipulation in Wall Street history. "There is not a doubt in my mind, not a single doubt" that naked short-selling helped destroy Bear, says Sen. Ted Kaufman, a Democrat from Delaware who has introduced legislation to curb such financial fraud. Asked to rate how obvious a case of naked short-selling Bear is, on a scale of one to 10, for-



mer SEC counsel Brent Baker doesn't hesitate. "Easily a 10," he says.

At the same time that naked short-sellers were counterfeiting Bear's stock, the firm was being hit by another classic tactic of bear raids: negative rumors in the media. Tipped off by a source, CNBC reporter David Faber reported on March 12th that Goldman Sachs had held up a trade with Bear because it was worried about the firm's creditworthiness. Faber noted that the hold was temporary – the deal had gone through that morning. But the damage was done; inside Bear, Faber's report was blamed for much of the subsequent panic.

"I like Faber, he's a good guy," a Bear executive later said. "But I wonder if he ever asked himself, 'Why is someone telling me this?' There was a reason this was leaked, and the reason is simple: Someone wanted us to go down, and go down hard."

At first, the full-blown speculative attack on Bear seemed to be working. Thanks to the media-fueled rumors and the mounting anxiety over the company's ability to make its payments, Bear's share price plummeted seven percent on March 13th, to \$57. It still had a ways to go for the mysterious short-seller to make a profit on his bet against the firm, but it was headed in the right direction. But then, early on the morning of Friday, March 14th, Bear's CEO, Alan Schwartz, struck a deal with the Fed and JPMorgan to provide an emergency loan to keep the company's doors open. When the news hit the street that morning, Bear's stock rallied, gaining more than nine percent and climbing back to \$62.

The sudden and unexpected rally prompted celebrations inside Bear's offices. "We're alive!" someone on the company's trading floor reportedly shouted, and employees greeted the news by high-fiving each other. Many gleefully believed that the short-sellers targeting the firm would get "squeezed" – in other words, if the share price kept going up, the bets against Bear would blow up in the attackers' faces.

The rally proved short-lived – Bear ended the day at \$30 – but it suggested that all was not lost. Then a strange thing happened. As Bear understood it, the emergency credit line that the Fed had arranged was originally supposed to last for 28 days. But that Friday, despite the rally, Geithner and then-Treasury secretary Hank Paulson – the former head of Goldman Sachs, one of the firms rumored to be shorting Bear –

had a sudden change of heart. When the market closed for the weekend, Paulson called Schwartz and told him that the rescue timeline had to be accelerated. Paulson wouldn't stay up another night worrying about Bear Stearns, he reportedly told Schwartz. Bear had until Sunday night to find a buyer or it could go fuck itself.

Bear was out of options. Over the course of that weekend, the firm opened its books to JPMorgan, the only realistic potential buyer. But upon seeing all the "shit" on Bear's books, as one source privy to the negotiations put it – including great gobs of toxic investments in the subprime markets – JPMorgan hedged. It wouldn't do the deal, it announced, unless it got two things: a huge bargain on the sale price, and a lot of public money to wipe out the "shit."

So the Fed – on whose New York board sits JPMorgan chief Jamie Dimon – immediately agreed to accommodate the new



buyers, forking over \$29 billion in public funds to buy up the yucky parts of Bear. Paulson, meanwhile, took care of the bargain issue, putting the government's gun to Schwartz's head and telling him he had to sell low. *Really* low.

On Saturday night, March 15th, Schwartz and Dimon had discussed a deal for JPMorgan to buy Bear at \$8 to \$12 a share. By Sunday afternoon, however, Geithner reported that the price had plunged even further. "Shareholders are going to get between \$3 and \$5 a share," he told Paulson.

But Paulson pissed on even that price from a great height. "I can't see why they're getting anything," he told Dimon that afternoon from Washington, via speakerphone. "I could see something nominal, like \$1 or \$2 per share."

Just like that, with a slight nod of Paulson's big shiny head, Bear was vaporized. This, remember, all took place while Bear's stock was still selling at \$30. By knock-

ers. Think of them as the house in a casino: They provide a gambler with markers to play and to manage his winnings.

Under the original concept, a hedge fund that wanted to short a stock like Bear Stearns would first "locate" the stock with his Prime Broker, then would do the trade with a so-called Executing Broker. But as time passed, Prime Brokers increasingly allowed their hedge-fund customers to use automated systems and "locate" the stock themselves. Now the conversation went something like this:

**EVIL HEDGE FUND:** I just sold a million shares of Bear Stearns. Here, hold this shitload of money for me.

**PRIME BROKER:** Awesome! Where did you borrow the shares from?

**EVIL HEDGE FUND:** Oh, from Corrupt Broker. You know, Vinnie.

**PRIME BROKER:** Oh, OK. Is he sure he can find those shares? Because, you know, there are rules.

**EVIL HEDGE FUND:** Oh, yeah. You know

routinely greenlight transactions they know are dicey.

In a conference held at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort in Phoenix in May 2008 – just over a month after Bear collapsed – a compliance officer for Goldman Sachs named Jonathan Breckenridge talks with his colleagues about how the firm's customers use an automated program to report where they borrowed their stock from. The problem, he says, is the system allows short-sellers to enter anything they want in the text field, no matter how nonsensical – or even leave the field blank. "You can enter *ABC*, you can enter *Go*, you can enter *Locate Goldman*, you can enter whatever you want," he says. "Three dots – I've actually seen that."

The room erupts with laughter.

After making this admission, Breckenridge asks officials from the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association, the trade group representing Wall Street broker-dealers, for guidance

## THE COUNTERFEIT BASIS of our economy extends to commodities like oil, home mortgages – even U.S. Treasury bonds.

ing the share price down 28 bucks, Paulson ensured that the manipulators who were illegally counterfeiting Bear's shares would make an awesome fortune.

**A**LTHOUGH WE DON'T KNOW who was behind the naked short-selling that targeted Bear – short-traders aren't required to reveal their stake in a company – the scam wasn't just a fetish crime for small-time financial swindlers. On the contrary, the widespread selling of shares without delivering them translated into an enormously profitable business for the biggest companies on Wall Street, fueling the growth of a booming sector in the financial-services industry called Prime Brokerage.

As with other Wall Street abuses, the lucrative business in counterfeiting stock got its start with a semisecret surrender of regulatory authority by the government. In 1989, a group of prominent Wall Street broker-dealers – led, ironically, by Bear Stearns – asked the SEC for permission to manage the accounts of hedge funds engaged in short-selling, assuming responsibility for locating, lending and transferring shares of stock. In 1994, federal regulators agreed, allowing the nation's biggest investment banks to serve as Prime Bro-

Vinnie. He's good for it.

**PRIME BROKER:** Sweet!

Following the SEC's approval of this cozy relationship, Prime Brokers boomed. Indeed, with the rise of discount brokers online and the collapse of IPOs and corporate mergers, Prime Brokerage – in essence, the service end of the short-selling business – is now one of the most profitable sectors that big Wall Street firms have left. Last year, Goldman Sachs netted \$3.4 billion providing "securities services" – the lion's share of it from Prime Brokerage.

When one considers how easy it is for short-sellers to sell stock without delivering, it's not hard to see how this can be such a profitable business for Prime Brokers. It's really a license to print money, almost in the literal sense. As such, Prime Brokers have tended to be lax about making sure that their customers actually possess, or can even realistically find, the stock they've sold. That point is made abundantly clear by tapes obtained by *ROLLING STONE* of recent meetings held by the compliance officers for big Prime Brokers like Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank. Compliance officers are supposed to make sure that traders at their firms follow the rules – but in the tapes, they talk about how they

in how to make this appear less blatantly improper. "How do you have in place a process," he wonders, "and make sure that it looks legit?"

The funny thing is that Prime Brokers didn't even need to fudge the rules. They could counterfeit stocks legally, thanks to yet another loophole – this one involving key players known as "market makers." When a customer wants to buy options and no one is lining up to sell them, the market maker steps in and sells those options out of his own portfolio. In market terms, he "provides liquidity," making sure you can always buy or sell the options you want.

Under what became known as the "options market maker exception," the SEC permitted a market maker to sell shares whether or not he had them or could find them right away. In theory, this made sense, since delaying the market maker from selling to offset a big buy order could dry up liquidity and slow down trading. But it also created a loophole for naked short-sellers to kill stocks easily – and legally. Take Bear Stearns, for example. Say the stock is trading at \$62, as it was on March 11th, and someone buys put options from the market maker to sell \$1.7 million in Bear stock nine days later at \$30. To offset that big trade, the market maker might try to keep his own portfolio balanced by selling



off shares in the company, whether or not he can locate them.

But here's the catch: The market maker often sells those phantom shares to the same person who bought the put options. That buyer, after all, would love to snap up a bunch of counterfeit Bear stock, since he can drive the company's price down by reselling those fake shares. In fact, the shares you buy from a market maker via the SEC-sanctioned loophole are sometimes called "bullets," because when you pump these counterfeit IOUs into the market, it's like firing bullets into the company – it kills the price, just like printing more Island Rubles kills a currency.

Which, it appears, is exactly what happened to Bear Stearns. Someone bought a shitload of puts in Bear, and then someone sold a shitload of Bear shares that never got delivered. Bear then staggered forward, bleeding from every internal organ, and fell on its face. "It looks to me like Bear Stearns got riddled with bullets," John Welborn, an economist with an investment firm called the Haverford Group, later observed.

So who conducted the naked short-selling against Bear? We don't know – but we do know that, thanks to the free pass the SEC gave them, Prime Brokers stood to profit from the transactions. And the confidential meeting at the Fed on March 11th included all the major Prime Brokers on Wall Street – as well as many of the biggest hedge funds, who also happen to be some of the biggest short-sellers on Wall Street.

THE ECONOMY'S FINANCIAL woes might have ended there – leaving behind an unsolved murder in which many of the prime suspects profited handsomely. But three months later, the killers struck again. On June 27th, 2008, an avalanche of undelivered shares in Lehman Brothers started piling up in the market. June 27th: 705,103 fails. June 30th: 814,870 fails. July 1st: 1,556,301 fails.

Then the rumors started. A story circulated on June 30th about Barclays buying Lehman for 25 percent less than the share price. The tale was quickly debunked, but the attacks continued, with hundreds of thousands of failed trades every day for more than a week – during which time Lehman lost 44 percent of its share price. The major players on Wall Street, who for years had confined this unseemly sort of insider rape to smaller companies, had begun to eat each other alive.

It made great capitalist sense to attack these giant firms – they were easy targets, after all, hideously mismanaged and engorged with debt – but an all-out shooting war of this magnitude posed a risk to everyone. And so a cease-fire was declared. In a remarkable order issued on July 15th, Cox dictated that short-sellers

must actually pre-borrow shares before they sell them. But in a hilarious catch, the order only covered shares of the 19 biggest firms on Wall Street, including Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, and would last only a month.

This was one of the most amazing regulatory actions ever: It essentially told Wall Street that it was enjoined from counterfeiting stock – but only temporarily, and only the stock of the 19 of the richest companies on Wall Street. Not surprisingly, the share price for Lehman and some of the other lucky robber barons surged on the news.

But the relief was short-lived. On August 12th, 2008, the Cox order expired – and fails in Lehman stock quickly started mounting. The attack spiked on September 9th, when there were over 1 million undelivered shares in Lehman. On September 10th, there were 5,877,649 failed trades. The day after, there were an astonishing 22,625,385 fails. The next day: 32,877,794. Then, on September 15th, the price of Lehman Brothers stock fell to 21 cents, and the company declared bankruptcy.

That naked shorting was the tool used to kill the company – which was, like Bear, a giant bursting sausage of deadly subprime deals that didn't need much of a push off the cliff – was obvious to everyone. Lehman CEO Richard Fuld, admittedly one of the biggest assholes of the 21st century, said as much a month later. "The naked shorts and rumormongers succeeded in bringing down Bear Stearns," Fuld told Congress. "And I believe that unsubstantiated rumors in the marketplace caused significant harm to Lehman Brothers."

The methods used to destroy these companies pointed to widespread and extravagant market manipulation, and the death of Lehman should have instigated a full-bore investigation. "This isn't a trail of bread crumbs," former SEC enforcement director Irving Pollack has pointed out. "This audit trail is lit up like an airport runway. You can see it a mile off. Subpoena e-mails. Find out who spread false rumors and also shorted the stock, and you've got your manipulators."

It would be an easy matter for the SEC to determine who killed Bear and Lehman, if it wanted to – all it has to do is look at the trading data maintained by the stock exchanges. But 18 months after the widespread market manipulation, the federal government's cop on the financial beat has barely lifted a finger to solve the two biggest murders in Wall Street history. The SEC refuses to comment on what, if anything, it is doing to identify the wrongdoers, saying only that "investigations related to the financial crisis are a priority."

The commission did repeal the preposterous "market maker" loophole on September 18th, 2008, forbidding market

makers from selling phantom shares. But that same day, the SEC also introduced a comical agreement called "Rule 10b-21," which makes it illegal for an Evil Hedge Fund to lie to a Prime Broker about where he borrowed his stock. Basically, this new rule formally exempted Wall Street's biggest players from any blame for naked short-selling, putting it all on the backs of their short-seller clients. Which was good news for firms like Goldman Sachs, which only a year earlier had been fined \$2 million for repeatedly turning a blind eye to clients engaged in illegal short-selling. Instead of tracking down the murderers of Bear and Lehman, the SEC simply eliminated the law against aiding and abetting murder. "The new rule just exempted the Prime Brokers from legal responsibility," says a financial player who attended closed-door discussions about the regulation. "It's a joke."

But the SEC didn't stop there – it also went out of its way to protect the survivors from the normal functioning of the marketplace. On September 15th, the same day that Lehman declared bankruptcy, the share price of Goldman and Morgan Stanley began to plummet sharply. There was little evidence of phantom shares being sold – in Goldman's case, fewer than .02 percent of all trades failed. Whoever was attacking Goldman and Morgan Stanley – if anyone was – was for the most part doing it legally, through legitimate short-selling. As a result, when the SEC imposed yet another order on September 17th curbing naked short-selling, it did nothing to help either firm, whose share prices failed to recover.

Then something extraordinary happened. Morgan Stanley lobbied the SEC for a ban on *legitimate* short-selling of financial stocks – a thing not even the most ardent crusaders against naked short-selling, not even tin-foil-hat-wearing Patrick Byrne, had ever favored. "I spent years just trying to get the SEC to listen to a request that they stop people from rampant illegal counterfeiting of my company's stock," says Byrne. "But when Morgan Stanley asks for a ban on legal short-selling, they get it literally overnight."

Indeed, on September 19th, Cox imposed a temporary ban on legitimate short-selling of all financial stocks. The stock price of both Goldman and Morgan Stanley quickly rebounded. The companies were also bailed out by an instant designation as bank holding companies, which made them eligible for a boatload of emergency federal aid. The law required a five-day wait for such a conversion, but Geithner and the Fed granted Goldman and Morgan Stanley their new status overnight.

So who killed Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers? Without a bust by the SEC,



all that's left is means and motive. Everyone in Washington and on Wall Street understood what it meant when Lehman, for years the hated rival of Goldman Sachs, was chosen by Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson – the former Goldman CEO – to be the one firm that *didn't* get a federal bailout. “When Paulson, a former Goldman guy, chose to sacrifice Lehman, that’s when you knew the whole fucking thing was dirty,” says one Democratic Party operative. “That’s like the Yankees not bailing out the Mets. It was just obvious.”

The day of Lehman’s collapse, Paulson also bullied Bank of America into buying Merrill Lynch – which left Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley as the only broker-teens left unaxed in the Camp Crystal Lake known as the American economy. Before they were hacked to bits, Merrill, Bear and Lehman all nurtured booming businesses as Prime Brokers. All that lucrative work had to go somewhere. So guess which firms made the

Take the commodities markets, where most of those betting on the prices of things like oil, wheat and soybeans have no product to actually deliver. “All speculative selling of commodity futures is ‘naked’ short selling,” says Adam White, director of research at White Knight Research and Trading. While buying things that don’t actually exist isn’t always harmful, it can help fuel speculative manias, like the oil bubble of last summer. “The world consumes 85 million barrels of oil per day, but it’s not uncommon to trade 1 billion barrels per day on the various commodities exchanges,” says White. “So you’ve got 12 paper barrels trading for every physical barrel.”

The same is true for mortgages. When lenders couldn’t find enough dope addicts to lend mansions to, some simply went ahead and started selling the same mortgages over and over to different investors. There are now a growing number of cases of such double-selling of mortgages: “It makes Bernie Madoff seem like chump

The counterfeit nature of our economy is troubling enough, given that financial power is concentrated in the hands of a few key players – “300 white guys in Manhattan,” as a former high-placed executive puts it. But over the course of the past year, that group of insiders has also proved itself brilliantly capable of enlisting the power of the state to help along the process of concentrating economic might – making it less and less likely that the financial markets will ever be policed, since the state is increasingly the captive of these interests.

The new president for whom we all had such high hopes went and hired Michael Froman, a Citigroup executive who accepted a \$2.2 million bonus *after* he joined the White House, to serve on his economic transition team – at the same time the government was giving Citigroup a massive bailout. Then, after promising to curb the influence of lobbyists, Obama hired a former Goldman Sachs lobbyist, Mark Patterson, as chief of staff at the Treasury.

## FEDERAL COPS WHO WALK the financial beat have barely lifted a finger to solve the biggest murders in Wall Street history.

most money in Prime Brokerage this year? According to a leading industry source, the top three were Goldman, JPMorgan and Morgan Stanley.

We may never know who killed Bear and Lehman. But it sure isn’t hard to figure out who’s left.

**W**HILE NAKED SHORT-selling was the weapon used to bring down both Bear and Lehman, it would be preposterous to argue that the practice caused the financial crisis. The most serious problems in this economy were the result of other, broader classes of financial misdeed: corruption of the ratings agencies, the use of smoke-and-mirrors like derivatives, an epidemic tulipomania called the housing boom and the overall decline of American industry, which pushed Wall Street to synthesize growth where none existed.

But the “phantom” shares produced by naked short-sellers are symptomatic of a problem that goes far beyond the stock market. “The only reason people talk about naked shorting so much is that stock is sexy and so much attention is paid to the stock market,” says a former investment executive. “This goes on in all the markets.”

change,” says April Charney, a legal-aid attorney based in Florida. Just like in the stock market, where short-sellers delivered IOUs instead of real shares, traders of mortgage-backed securities sometimes conclude deals by transferring “lost-note affidavits” – basically a “my dog ate the mortgage” note – instead of the actual mortgage. A paper presented at the American Bankruptcy Institute earlier this year reports that up to a third of all notes for mortgage-backed securities may have been “misplaced or lost” – meaning they’re backed by IOUs instead of actual mortgages.

How about bonds? “Naked short-selling of stocks is nothing compared to what goes on in the bond market,” says Trimboth, the former DTC staffer. Indeed, the practice of selling bonds without delivering them is so rampant it has even infected the market for U.S. Treasury notes. That’s right – Wall Street has actually been brazen enough to counterfeit the debt of the United States government right under the eyes of regulators, in the middle of a historic series of government bailouts! In fact, the amount of failed trades in Treasury bonds – the equivalent of “phantom” stocks – has doubled since 2007. In a single week last July, some \$250 billion worth of U.S. Treasury bonds were sold and not delivered.

He hired another Goldmanite, Gary Gensler, to police the commodities markets. He handed control of the Treasury and Federal Reserve over to Geithner and Bernanke, a pair of stooges who spent their whole careers being bellhops for New York bankers. And on the first anniversary of the collapse of Lehman Brothers, when he finally came to Wall Street to promote “serious financial reform,” his plan proved to be so completely absent of balls that the share prices of the major banks soared at the news.

The nation’s largest financial players are able to write the rules for own their businesses and brazenly steal billions under the noses of regulators, and nothing is done about it. A thing so fundamental to civilized society as the integrity of a stock, or a mortgage note, or even a U.S. Treasury bond, can no longer be protected, not even in a crisis, and a crime as vulgar and conspicuous as counterfeiting can take place on a systematic level for years without being stopped, even after it begins to affect the modern-day equivalents of the Rockefellers and the Carnegies. What 10 years ago was a cheap stock-fraud scheme for second-rate grifters in Brooklyn has become a major profit center for Wall Street. Our burglar class now rules the national economy. And no one is trying to stop them.



# The master of modern noir has completed an epic secret history of America – a trilogy so dark that he lost his mind writing it

## James Ellroy's American Apocalypse

By Sean Woods

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER YANG

**O**N A RECENT NEW YORK MORNING, JAMES ELLROY, THE SELF-PROCLAIMED “Demon Dog” of American fiction, is in a good mood. “I feel like the weight of a lifetime has been lifted off me,” he says, sitting in a hotel room. “I’m 61, and I feel like a kid. All I’ve wanted, ever, was to write great fucking novels, have a couple of dogs and fuck women. What else is there? I mean, a good hamburger’s OK, but. . . .” Ellroy is a master of shtick. Over the course of a few minutes he can veer from over-the-top braggadocio (“I’m the Beethoven of crime fiction”) to hipster jive (“can’t make the scene without caffeine”) to unapologetic perversion (“I’m a sex fiend!”) to biblical righteousness (“I’m a Scottish minister’s son, and I believe in privation and a personal responsibility to God”). Best known for his modern noir classic *L.A. Confidential*, Ellroy has just released *Blood’s a Rover*, the last novel in his Underworld U.S.A. trilogy. The book completes his bleak and disturbing vision of the metastasized cancers at the heart of the midcentury American empire – from the Bay of Pigs and Vietnam to J. Edgar Hoover and Howard Hughes – as seen through the interconnected schemes and criminal enterprises of rogue FBI agents, homicidal cops, mobsters and contract killers. Ellroy’s obsession with the dark side of America can be traced to the well-documented





**EXPLORING  
THE SHADOWS**  
The author of *The  
Black Dahlia* and  
*L.A. Confidential* in  
his Hollywood home



traumas of his early years: his mother's unsolved murder, his ne'er-do-well father who died not long after. A teenage voyeur who broke into women's homes to steal their lingerie, Ellroy washed out of the Army and spent the next decade addicted to speed and booze, jailed for petty thefts and often homeless, living on the streets of L.A. After sobering up in 1977, he began earning a living as a golf caddie, got some books published, then emerged out of nowhere as the bestselling author of *The Black Dahlia* and *The Big Nowhere*, with a distinctive and brutal style that one critic described as "so hard-boiled it burns the pot."

But as his fame grew, Ellroy's personal life grew darker. Two marriages crumbled, and he threw himself deeper into his work – and wound up suffering a mental breakdown in 2001, during the book tour for *The Cold Six Thousand*. "Flew too high, worked

ity. I realized, "Holy shit – this fucking book is so fucking good that now I can't write about the Kennedy assassination." But then I began to see that I could write a trilogy that would chart all the harbingers of JFK's assassination and create a complete human infrastructure of big public events. After the L.A. Quartet, I didn't want to write anything that could be categorized as a crime novel. I wanted to explore a theme that I call the "private nightmare of public policy."

*What's the private nightmare?*

The outline of American history from 1958 to '63 is iconic and well-known: the emergence of the civil rights movement, the ascent of JFK, J. Edgar Hoover's repressive shit, the Mob, the Cuban Missile Crisis. Then the decade of revolution in the youth culture, the continuing nightmare in Vietnam, more bombs, more crazy

Right. *Blood's a Rover* is where the people who have been through the shit of 1958 to 1968 start talking about what it all means. I lived through that shit. I sensed it going on around me but (a) I was bombed until '77, and (b) I was an outlier in just a lot of ways. I was never a rock & roll guy; I was always a classical-music guy. I was never a peacemaker; I was a fuck-you right-winger. I've got a weird view of American history that I think is viable and allows me to spread empathy around fairly evenly.

*Do you think it's naive to believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone?*

It would be a triumph of spatial logic and empirical thinking over imagination to believe that something else wasn't going on. I look at the lone-gunner theory and think, "It doesn't make moral, historical or metaphysical sense to me, so I'm just going to reject it." And it's a better fucking story my



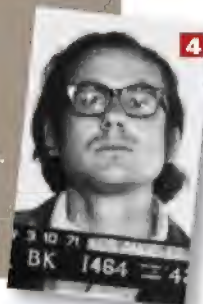
too hard," he says. "Crazy suppressed shit came out and just blew up in my face." Now, eight years later, he's finishing up a memoir called *The Hilliker Curse* and enjoying the release of *Blood's a Rover*, a giant historical noir that provides a romantic coda to his Underworld U.S.A. series. The protagonists, whom Ellroy calls "right-wing leg-breakers," pursue redemption in the form of a left-wing agitator named Joan, making it like so many of his novels: three men obsessed with a single woman over the course of a great big bloody book.

*Your Underworld U.S.A. trilogy covers 1958 to 1972, the years when you were most marginalized – homeless, addicted. Is that one of the reasons you wanted to write about that period?*

The trilogy derives entirely from my reading of Don DeLillo's novel *Libra* in 1988. It's told largely from the viewpoint of Lee Harvey Oswald, and DeLillo makes him the single greatest, most fully realized loner in American history. It was also the first time I had seen, in literature, an unintelligent and malleable dipshit portrayed with such empathy and complex-

## A Haunted Life

Ellroy's mother was murdered when he was 10; the case remains unsolved. (1) With his mother, Jean, in the 1950s. (2) The night of the killing. (3) Where his mother was last seen alive. (4) Ellroy's mug shot from 1971.



CIA shit, political assassinations. We know that. That's the public policy. But who's out there taking names, doing the wiretapping, breaking legs, shaking people down, making a buck out of it – and suffering the convoluted morality of it? Who's coming to the point where they can't do it anymore, and what makes them change? That's the private nightmare. That's *Blood's a Rover*.

*This is a very dark trilogy. Did it fuck you up writing the books?*

It fucked me up completely. I inhabited the souls of these leg-breakers. I stayed with them morally and spiritually. But *Blood's a Rover* is about the necessity of revolution and change. This book goes somewhere entirely different from the first two.

*Deeper into the moral consequences of violence and corruption?*

way. So I won't argue about the lone gunman – I don't give a shit. So what? Fuck you. Who's your daddy? Who's got the better story to tell? Guess what, it's me.

*One of your characters, a young right-winger named Don Crutchfield, is so willfully out of step with the times that he seems like a fictionalized version of you.*

That's me – a big guy with a crew cut and straight-leg pants in the Summer of Love wondering why he can't get laid. "Well, maybe if you quit jacking off and listen to rock & roll instead of Beethoven, you might be a little more likely." In the book, Crutchfield doesn't know what to do for Christmas. He's never been laid, and he's 23, and he's lonely. He's a peeper, and he's got two options: go to midnight service in the Lutheran church, or go peep black women in South Central L.A. That's me in a nutshell.

*Do you still have those right-wing tendencies?*

Right-wing tendencies? I do that to fuck with people. I thought Bush was a slimebag and the most disastrous American president in recent times. I voted for Obama. He's a lot like Jack Kennedy – they both have big ears and infectious smiles. But

Senior editor SEAN WOODS joined the staff of ROLLING STONE in 2002.



Obama is a deeper guy. Kennedy was an appetite guy. He wanted pussy, hamburgers, booze. Jack did a lot of dope.

*So why do you still seem to identify with the right-wing goons you create?*

I'm a Christian, and my books are stories of redemption. I show you the karmic consequences of horrific deeds. More often than not, I want you to love my characters in the end because they have transcended. They have found something bigger, deeper, morally surer than themselves.

*You once wrote that Dashiell Hammett perfectly captured the American notion that a job can destroy a person. Is that what happens to your characters?*

The core of Hammett's art is the masculine figure in American society – he is a job holder. He goes at his job with a ruthless determination and has an unwillingness to look beyond it. That's who these guys of mine are. They are so fucking proficient, even as their lives are in precipitous decline. They're eaten up, but they're driven by their inbred American sense of responsibility. There's an undercurrent of tenderness that's driving them as they go about doing their jobs so very ruthlessly.

*The way you portray J. Edgar Hoover's wiretapping is very present-day, especially given what happened under Bush.*

I don't know what I pick out of the zeitgeist. I'm not being disingenuous – I honestly don't know. Let me tell you about my life. I'm 61. I exercise a lot, I don't drink, I don't use drugs, I don't sleep very well. I'm very limited in my interests. I've got a big apartment, I've got a big sports car. I quit running around trying to get married. "Get married and impregnate women" hasn't played out for me. My life has become a matriarchy. I talk to Helen Knode, my ex-wife, my girlfriends and colleagues on the phone. I've never used a computer. I'm not shitting you – I'm cut off from the world.

*Your life was such a disaster for so long. Did you ever think you wouldn't make it?*

I was always looking to get off, and I had a very pronounced cold streak. But as fucked up as I was, I always had faith. And I loved to laugh. I could always go in a corner, scratch my balls, jack off, pull some dipshit stunt, like dining and dashing. I needed to make my way out in the world because my dad was completely fucked up. I never felt pissed off about it. I never felt like, "Ooh, I don't have a family." I always wanted a family.

*That's surprising. Given your books, it's easy to believe that you see the world as an unrelentingly dark place.*

No, no, I'm not a misanthrope. I'm optimistic. Heck, I think human beings can evolve over time. I like people – in a distanced way [laughs]. Individuals have prominence over their psyches and can

liberate themselves from horrible states of being as the world goes to shit around them. And I've chosen to do that.

*In your upcoming memoir, "The Hilliker Curse," you express regret for the way you sold books by using your mother's murder.*

I was young and callous. But now I realize my mother and I are not a murder story. We are a love story. And the central story I have to tell is women. I knew that if I consciously applied my talent and my brain power to the persona of my mother, it would lead me to be more receptive to women in general.

*In the memoir you also write about your overpowering lust for women. But on another level, you're very puritanical.*

I want women. But it's discerning, it's tender. I don't see sex as being inherently squalid – I see the marketing of sexuality and the vulgarization of sex as being depraved. They've denuded and made common something holy and sacred. We need to reinvest in sex, have less sex, wait till the eighth date before you fuck and suck.

---

## "I want to explore the private nightmare of public policy. I show you the karmic consequences of horrific deeds."

---

*In "Blood's a Rover," you seem obsessed with Joan, the left-wing Jewish activist.*

I wrote this book for a woman I was in love with named Joan. It was the first time I ever did that. I've started following women involuntarily who look like Joan. You just walk 10 yards, and it's not her.

*But you keep following?*

I eventually come to my senses. Definitely a fucking brain click.

*Do you still peep women?*

Yeah. Yeah, I do. I stay in on holidays. I live in a deco building on the edge of Hollywood. One holiday, I was peeping this big-ass redhead. She was flipping burgers, and her blouse would come up, and she would pull it down. She bent down way low, and I could see her bra strap. Then my buddy called and said, "What are you doing, Ellroy? Come on out here, we're cooking." I said, "I don't want any food; I'm peeping. Leave me the fuck alone."

*Do you feel guilty about that?*

No.

*Why not? Do see voyeurism as a form of appreciation?*

Yeah, you want to be saved. You're genetically wired to salvation, and women are our beacons in the night.

*And that doesn't strike you as weird?*

I am utterly cut out to be in dark rooms talking to women on the telephone and working. My buddy called recently and said, "Hey, we got an extra ticket for Fleetwood Mac." What the fuck? I'd rather watch flies fuck in Alabama. I live in a vacuum so that I might go back and live more assiduously in pockets of American history.

*Is that the secret to your success?*

There are greater writers out there, and more gifted writers. What I am is a thinking machine. I see myself as emblematic of extreme drive and ambition and focus. It's given me hyperacuity. I can write like a motherfucker, and man, do I rigorously think about shit and what it all means.

*What led to your mental breakdown?*

I went through a period of months and months where I was in love with a married woman who was never gonna leave her husband. I'd just be surrounded by that big fuckin' cosmic nothingness. You could say it's the issue of not being able to be with the woman you love. But more than anything else, it was just being alone in the cosmos and knowing that you're gonna die.

*Did you see it coming?*

It was the shit of a lifetime just oozing out of my palms. Physical stress, overwork, fissuring unconsciousness, boorishness, recklessness. Much too much mental energy expended for too many years. Raging panic attacks and horrible insomnia fits. I was just gone. I was way out of my emotions – shit roared through me at 1,000 rpms. I couldn't hold anything back. And I couldn't control anything through narrative. It was the worst time in my life.

*You ended up in an institution, right?*

Yeah, a bunch of them. Overnight at the nut ward in Monterey, overnight in the nut ward in Tucson. There was no rubber hose, but I was bombed, what can I tell ya? Before I knew it, I was back at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel jackin' off to pictures of Anne Sexton – in clothes! A dead poet! That's how fucked up I am! [Laughs]

*Did you learn anything from losing your mind?*

I learned a lot from the crackup. I want to write great books and be good to people, and to shamelessly promote myself. But nothing's worse than an ambitious person with no control. Someone who'll hustle anybody, shabbily. No one wants to have anything to do with people like that.

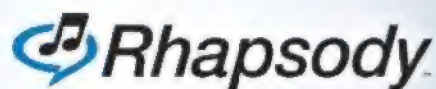
*So it made you a better writer?*

I wanna continue to write big-ass, shit-kicking, profound books. I'm arrogant, and I'm fearful. But I'm not as fearful as I used to be. The crackup took a lot of my fear away. ❶





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# Reviews

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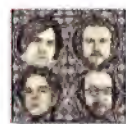
**Jim James,  
Bright Eyes  
and M. Ward  
meld for a true  
supergroup**

## Monsters of Folk

★★★★★

Monsters of Folk *Shangri-La*

BY WILL HERMES



MONSTERS OF Folk are already being called this generation's Traveling Wil-

burys, but a better comparison is Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. Like CSNY, Monsters of Folk yoke together a quartet of folk-minded rockers [Jim James of My Morning Jacket, Conor Oberst and Mike Mogis of Bright Eyes, M. Ward of She and Him] at the top of their game – and both groups create something that's often greater than the sum of its parts.

For one thing, there are the harmonies, which step fearlessly into the arena just as harmony singing has become the coin of the realm (see Fleet Foxes, Grizzly Bear, etc.). James', Oberst's and Ward's voices meld beautifully in a variety of styles: Check the *Meet the Beatles*-style belting on "Say Please" or the "Teach Your Children" vocal timbres on "Map of the World." Ward's mythic Americana spurs campfire-song playfulness on "Goodway" and "Baby Boomer," while James' current obsession with classic soul briefly turns the group into a trip-hop Four Tops on "Dear God (Sincerely M.O.F.)."

But the most striking thing, especially given the punch-line band name, is the quality and cohesiveness of the material. James, Oberst and Ward get to sing lead on five tracks each, and though any individual authorship is cloaked under



collective writing credits, their signature styles stand out like scents in a Southern Italian kitchen. Ward owns "The Sandman, the Brakeman and Me," an ageless hobo lullaby that may be his most perfectly turned song to date. Oberst's verses on "Temazcal" – "The love we made at gunpoint wasn't love at all/They're dancing in the valley, the moon is the mirror ball" – epitomize his damaged-drifter persona. "Losin Yo Head" is an outsize My Morning Jacket-style rocker, complete with hollered vocals, sizzling high-hats and a guitar solo, albeit a minimalist one. Much credit for everything holding together must go to sound scientist/multi-instrumentalist Mogis, who takes a vocal back seat but plays everything from pedal steel and mandolin to Wurlitzer keyboard and bongos.

*Monsters* is not a concept record, but strong themes course through it. God is one: Oberst recalls a lost time when "God was on our side"; Ward tells the Lord he's "gotta lotta losing." And the record closes with James' beautifully assanant image of "Mohammed rolling dice with Christ at twilight" in "His Master's Voice," a song about spiritual belief, self-determination and "the call to war."

Individual excesses crop up occasionally; Oberst's warning to "don't never buy nothing from a man named Truth," for instance, feels like slightly overcooked spaghetti-Western existentialism. Like Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, there is a political consciousness here, but it's a little mushy: "We don't agree about September," sings Ward on "Baby Boomer," in an apparent reference to the 9/11 conspiracy debate. "Can we agree on Vietnam?" But most often, the four folkies keep each other focused. Everyone shines – although James, whose lead vocals open and close the set, beams brightest, the eclecticism of My Morning Jacket's 2008 opus, *Evil Urges*, brought into sharper focus by the company. Sometimes too many cooks are precisely enough.

**Key Tracks:** "Dear God (Sincerely M.O.F.)," "Say Please"

# Mariah: Imperfect, Loving It

Carey teams up with The-Dream and Tricky Stewart for the loose, appealing 'Angel'

**Mariah Carey** ★★★★★½

*Memoirs of an Imperfect Angel* Island Def Jam



MARIAH CAREY, COMEDIAN? JOKES have never been Carey's forte, but on her 12th album, she gets in touch with her funny bone, adding a cheeky marching-band coda to the thumping club jam "Up Out My Face," threatening to out a cheating lover on national television in "Betcha Gon' Know" ("Oprah Winfrey whole segment, for real"); even poking fun at her own vocal signature, those stemware-shattering falsetto trills ("Love me down till I hit the top of my soprano," she coos in "More Than Just Friends"). The levity reflects the company Mariah is keeping: Every track on *Memoirs of an Imperfect Angel* was overseen by Carey and the ace duo of The-Dream and Tricky Stewart, who have been known to spice their dense, inventive R&B concoctions with yuks.

The result is Carey's most sonically and tonally coherent release, a mix of love ballads ("Inseparable") and sassy breakup anthems ("Standing O") that might have been her best album had it been several songs shorter. *Memoirs* sags in its second half, on songs such as the tepid "Impossible" and "Languishing (The Interlude)." By the time Carey's plodding cover of "I Want to Know What Love Is" rolls around, the joke's on her listeners.

JODY ROSEN

**Key Tracks:**

"Betcha Gon' Know," "H.A.T.E.U."

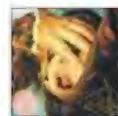


**DIVA AT PLAY**  
Carey finds her sense of humor on her 12th album.

# The Flaming Lips ★★★★★

Embryonic Warner Bros.

Wayne Coyne and crew load up on Miles, gaze at cosmos



"I WISH I COULD go back in time," Wayne Coyne yelps on the Flaming Lips' 12th record. In a sense, he has: These psych-rock mystics haven't sounded so off-the-wall since they were Oklahoma acidheads in the Eighties. Most of *Embryonic* sounds like laid-back echoes of Miles Davis' early-1970s skronk jazz, with distorted funk grooves undercutting pillowy vibraphones and zonked electronics. Despite tons of studio chaff (five songs are fragments named after zodiac signs), a theme emerges, something about keying into the cosmos by relinquishing control. Hippie hokum? Maybe. But the Lips have always been able to subvert pie-eyed whimsy with a sense of homespun beauty, and there's plenty of that here too.

JON DOLAN

**Key Tracks:** "Silver Trembling Hands," "I Can Be a Frog"

# Harper Simon

★★★★★½

Harper Simon *Vagrant/Tulsi*

Paul's son strikes out on his own, very pleasantly



AT 37, HARPER Simon apparently doesn't mind taking after his pops, Paul, who used to showcase the young, guitar-playing Harper when he was touring on *Graceland*. Paul co-wrote two tracks on Harper's debut, a friendly album recorded with experienced session men, and you can hear the likeness in the serene alto Harper employs on songs like the wry, acoustic "Ha Ha." He also skews country, notably on the Byrds-y "Shooting Star." Sleepy lyrics like "Sometimes we all break down/When there's no friends around" show that Harper's tunes need more personality, but his well-crafted, breezily pretty melodies keep you coming back.

CHRISTIAN HOARD

**Key Tracks:** "Cactus Flower Rag," "Shooting Star"

JAMES WHITE



## BUY THESE NOW

### Pearl Jam

#### Backspacer

Monkeywrench

Eddie Vedder and crew wake up from the Bush era with their fastest, fiercest disc yet, bringing the hammer down with a killer three-song opener: "Gonna See My Friend," "Got Some" and "The Fixer."

### Miranda Lambert

#### Revolution

Columbia Nashville

Nashville's outlaw hottie sticks to her six-shooters, firing on her radio and announcing that it's "Time to Get a Gun." (Red states: Please ignore the message.) The most kickass country of the year.

### The Drums

#### Summertime! Twentyseven

It sounds like a terrible idea: Joy Division meets the Ventures. But somehow this Brooklyn quartet make it work; one of the most promising indie-pop debuts of 2009.

## Gossip ★★★★★

Music for Men Columbia

### Punk-blues diva transforms into disco shaman



TWO PARTS CORIN Tucker to one part Big Mama Thornton, Arkansas' Beth Ditto

is a bow-down awesome singer, and her powerhouse trio have been making groove-wise punk blues for a decade. But here, with help from producer Rick Rubin, they remake themselves as a badass dance machine. Guitarist Brace Paine slashes out grooves, drummer Hannah Billie keeps it live, and Ditto skids between fuck-me hollers and don't-fuck-with-me roars, quoting Aretha's "Chain of Fools" on the queer anthem "Men in Love" and riding B-52s-style riffs on "Spare Me From the World." Punk purists may hate it. But dance-floor revelers will drown them out. **WILL HERMES**

**Key Tracks:** "Heavy Cross," "8th Wonder," "Love Long Distance"

## Raekwon ★★★★★

Only Built 4 Cuban Linx, Pt. II Ice H2O/EMI

### Wu-Tang Clan nation awaken: Stellar sequel to 1990s classic



RAEKWON'S 1995 classic *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx* defined a

certain type of underground hip-hop hit: Rather than try to bully you into submission, it surrounded you with a haze of impressionistic street stories, filled with cocaine, gun violence and high-living hustlers. *Pt. II* approximates the feel of the original, with Dr. Dre, RZA and the late J Dilla working up a slicker version of the first volume's eerie production, as Pyrex bubbles and bodies drop. Raekwon's eye is colder than ever as he delivers asymmetrical rhymes and piles up dirty details – the first verse of "Catalina" alone mentions red tops, nickel-bag valcyte, narcs, fire escapes and Gillette razors. This one will make heads from Shaolin to San Diego happy. **C.H.**

**Key Tracks:** "Catalina," "House of Flying Daggers"

## The Very Best ★★★★★½

Warm Heart of Africa

Green Owl

### Art rock meets Malawi for the African freestyle of the year



U.K. DJ CREW Radioclit have far-ranging ears (along with a great name). They

joined Malawian singer Esau Mwamwaya for last year's Internet freebie *Esau Mwamwaya and Radioclit Are the Very Best*, a mixtape combining originals with remakes of tracks by M.I.A. and Vampire Weekend. On *Warm Heart of Africa*, those acts return the favor with guest spots, alongside fat beats and Mwamwaya's warm vocals. The best tune is the title cut, with VW's Ezra Koenig. But the woozy slow-jam "Julia," among other tracks, proves the group's polyglot street jams are plenty catchy unassisted. **W.H.**

**Key Tracks:** "Warm Heart of Africa," "Julia," "Kada Manja"

## TOP SINGLES

### Drake ★★★★★ "Fear"

All major services

### Drake feat. Kanye West, Lil Wayne and Eminem

#### ★★★★★ "Forever"

All major services

"I think they call this, um, venting," mutters Drake over the opening bars of "Fear." He should know. The skillful Canadian MC has emerged as rap's biggest new thing by staking out a middle ground between the sleek braggadocio of Jay-Z and the neurotic navel-gazing of hip-hop's venter-in-chief, Kanye West. "Fear" has a plush beat from DJ Khalil, but Drake is downcast, bellyaching rather blandly about how hard it is at the top ("The honesty



Drake: A little more swagger

of my music has left me too exposed"). He's better in the booming "Forever," where he boasts unrepentantly about his It-boy status, outrapping his three illustrious guests in the process. There's a lesson here: For Drake, swaggering beats venting. **J.R.**

### Thom Yorke

★★★★★

#### "Feeling Pulled Apart by Horses"

Leaked

This overhaul of an unreleased early-2000s Radiohead track resonates like a bong hit: badass soul-jazz bass riff, bomb-shelter dub drums, bug-out echo-chamber vocals. A collaboration with Jonny Greenwood, it sounds like a groovier, 21st-century version of Sev-enties metapunk synth duo Suicide. Chill, like a meat locker. **W.H.**

### Julian Casablancas

★★★★½

#### "11th Dimension"

myspace.com/juliancasablancas

It's awesome to hear the Strokes' frontman – back-to-basics rock savior of the early '00s – rocking an Eighties synth-disco groove. "I got music coming outta my hands and feet!" he declares, before the song dissolves into guitars, live drums and pure Strokes lust. **W.H.**

### Alicia Keys

★★½

#### "Doesn't Mean Anything"

iTunes

No wonder this cut off Keys' forthcoming album sounds familiar – she lifts from past hits: The love-struck premise is from "If I Ain't Got You," the midtempo piano from "No One." It's palatable, but the banal lyrics ("I had it all, but it doesn't mean anything since you're gone") may send you back to the originals. **NICOLE FREHSE**

### Massive Attack feat. Tunde Adebimpe

★★★★

#### "Pray for Rain"

massiveattack.com

Haunted organ, blue piano and muted drums make this sound more like retro Nina Simone than trip-hop redux – until TV on the Radio's frontman chants his way into multitrack heaven. Nice to hear those nuevo-soulman pipes without the high-density stage dressing. **W.H.**

### Death Cab for Cutie

★★★★½

#### "Meet Me on the Equinox"

Leaked

When Ben Gibbard sings about bodies intertwined on the lead single from the *New Moon* soundtrack, you can practically hear a million *Twilight* die-hards sighing. "Equinox" is classic Death Cab from its opening arpeggio, but the chorus alternates between a tightly wound motif and a burst of harmonic euphoria that fully embraces the film's moody sexiness. **CARYN GANZ**

### Kris Allen

★★★★

#### "Live Like We're Dying"

Leaked

Allen's proper first single is just what his fans wanted when they got this year's cringe-worthy *Idol* coronation song, "No Boundaries." A cover of Irish pop trio the Script, the tune has a soul-rock vibe that suits Allen's vocal range; he should stick with this kind of stuff. **ERICA FUTTERMAN**



## FRICKE'S PICKS

By David Fricke

## Buckley Stripped Bare

**Tim Buckley** was just 20 and a few months away from making his second Elektra album, the baroque-pop treasure *Goodbye and Hello*, when he gave the stunning raw-folk performance - just voice and acoustic guitar, taped with a single mike on a machine usually reserved for field recordings - on *Live at the Folklore Centre, NYC - March 6, 1967* (Tompkins Square). The intimacy is audible; a few coughs during "Cripples Cry" are a rare break in the hypnotized silence of the audience, three dozen strong in a small room. Buckley sounds emboldened by the setting too, playing mostly new songs (six of them previously unreleased) with robust strumming and an aggressive delight in his rippled-glass cries. A year after this show, Buckley was deep into the liquid writing and improvised-vocal reverie of 1968's *Happy Sad* - he never made a studio record this simple and dramatic. A closer parallel: the 1993 solo tapes that became his son Jeff's debut, *Live at Sin-é*. In both, you get a Buckley on the verge, stripped bare and spellbinding.

## The Pines' Stark Country

The **Pines** - stark-country singer-songwriters **Ben-son Ramsey** and **David Huckfelt** - have a thing for speed: They recorded their fine new album, *Tremolo* (Red House), in two days, half the time it took them to cut 2007's *Sparrows in the Bell*. But

ON THE VERGE  
Buckley live  
in 1967



there is no undue haste in *Tremolo*'s quietly gripping tension. A state of emergency runs through these songs (like "the turnstile of greed and fear" in "Pray Tell"), but there is safe haven too, even if it's just a dream of love in "Shiny Shoes," and the Pines get there with a warm, drawling poise in their voices and spare, resonant picking.

## Rockin' the Casbah

Sharif wouldn't like it: *Raks Raks Raks - 27 Golden Garage Psych Nuggets From the Iranian 60s Scene* (Raks Discos) is a magnetically weird a-go-go of Middle Eastern rhythms, guitars acting like ouds and oddly translated R&B (see *Googoosh*'s harem-Aretha shot at "Respect"). This was a brief party for bands like the **Rebels** and **Moha Jamin**, who aspired to Beatlemania under the shah's repressive modernism. That copies of these rare singles and EPs also survived Sharia is a miracle.

## The Entrance Band ★★★½

The Entrance Band  
*Ecstatic Peace!*

Baltimore transplant takes  
folk rock to new, freaky levels



**GUY BLAKESLEE** is committed to his vision of freak-rock transcendence: He relocated from his native Baltimore to SoCal's Laurel Canyon, a Sixties hotbed of hippie free living, and expanded his bluesy solo act, Entrance, into a power trio. On their debut, he moans echo-caked utopian incantations, hustles some groovy conspiracy theories, spins a stolen Dylan melody into a elegiac space jam and ponders the nature of "circular time." But there's as much Sonic Youth doom in his band's guitar explorations as there is folky grooviness; on songs like "Lookout!" a dark chill haunts the incense and peppermints.

JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: "M.L.K.,"  
"Hourglass"

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## David Gray

★★★½

Draw the Line

Mercer Street

Brit singer can't summon "Babylon" mojo



U.K. singer-songwriter David Gray seems to have lost the hun-

ger that drove him to pen songs like the trembling 1993 gem "Debauchery" and his skittering 2000 breakthrough, "Babylon." His last two albums have been snoozers, and while he picks up the pace on *Draw the Line*, the songs are more second-rate Radiohead, Coldplay and Van Morrison than first-rate Gray. The slow-burning title track and the single "Fugitive" retain some of the old tension, but "Stella the Artist" could be a reject from *Tupelo Honey*, and "Full Steam," a duet with Annie Lennox, comes off like the emotional climax of a bad musical.

MARK KEMP

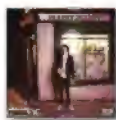
**Key Tracks:** "Fugitive," "Draw the Line"

## Toddla T

★★★★½

Skanky Skanky 1965

Brit "boom DJ" commands you to dance



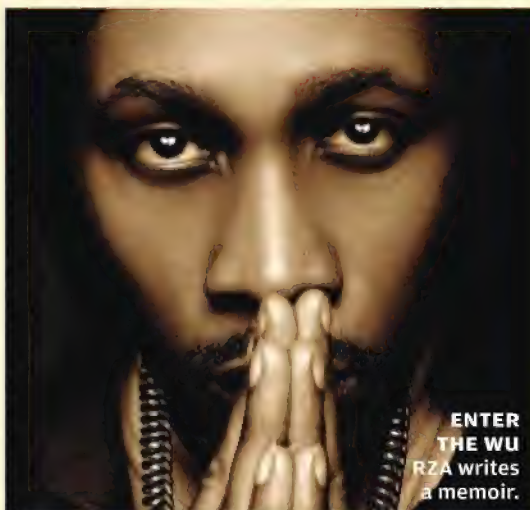
SOME DJS APPRECIATE the value of subtlety. Toddla T is not one of

them, and thank God for that. He's the 24-year-old U.K. dubstep beatmaster from the warehouse parties of Sheffield, and he's become an underground sensation with the theme song "Boom DJ From the Steel City." *Skanky* is a riotously funny barrage of electro hooks and dancehall riddims; Toddla T even takes the mike for "Road Trip," chronicling the hard life of a superstar DJ: "I play tunes to people/People pretend to like it." Pretend? Not bloody likely.

ROB SHEFFIELD

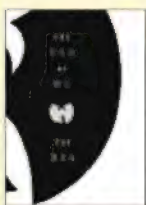
**Key Tracks:** "Boom DJ From the Steel City," "Road Trip"

## BOOKS



ENTER THE WU  
RZA writes a memoir.

### The Tao of Wu ★★★★★ The RZA Riverhead



Artist memoir, ghetto narrative and manual of divine mathematics, *The Tao of Wu* is unusually compelling for a book written by a star-caliber musician. That's because the RZA, who masterminded Wu-Tang Clan at their dawn and height, has led a more heroic and eventful life than most stars. RZA has mixed world religion, music, chess, superhero comics

and kung-fu movies into his own idiosyncratic worldview, and he's dead serious about a spiritual quest that began with the Twelve Jewels of the Five Percent Nation, trekked to the far side of Shaolin and hasn't ended yet. You don't have to dig numerology to care about his candid story and respect his self-taught, self-important precepts. ROBERT CHRISTGAU

### Cornflakes With John Lennon and Other Tales From a Rock 'n' Roll Life ★★★★★ Robert Hilburn Rodale



Longtime *Los Angeles Times* music critic Hilburn earned the friendship of artists such as Bruce Springsteen, John Lennon and Johnny Cash, and few writers have snagged more candid interviews from cagey subjects like Bob Dylan. Less a memoir than a chronological collection of close-up encounters with rock royalty, this page-turner peaks

during Hilburn's recollection of a tear-streaked Yoko Ono sitting in bed the day after Lennon's assassination and telling the world, "The future is still ours to make." That's true, but what a history. BARRY WALTERS

### Bicycle Diaries ★★★★★ David Byrne Viking



Don't read Byrne's *Bicycle Diaries* for inside dirt on Talking Heads, but pick it up if you're looking for a compelling travelogue and journal from one of rock's broadest minds. Byrne - who says that bikes have been his primary mode of transportation since the 1980s - recalls his two-wheeled jaunts all over the world, from the chaos of Istanbul's streets to navigating his hometown, New York, during the 2003 blackout. And though this book isn't for them, music fans will enjoy his story of busking with a ukulele on the streets of Berkeley in the Seventies. ANDY GREENE

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## Built to Spill

★★★★½

There Is No Enemy

Warner Bros.

Guitar guru descends from mountain bearing riffs



BUILT TO SPILL CEO Doug Martsch is alt-rock's Thomas Pynchon, holed

up in a remote studio (Boise, Idaho) and issuing immaculate artworks when he damn well pleases. His latest is classic latter-day BTS, a crystal palace of refracting guitar tones and textures, walls rising majestically above his sweet, nasal mewl. What's on Martsch's mind? What you'd expect from a dude spending lots of time in his head: dreams, boredom, life's meaning or lack thereof. Those seeking the naive concision of earlier records will be disappointed: Most songs sprawl near five minutes or longer. But their components are all about simple melodic beauty, writ large – prog-rock for pop purists.

WILL HERMES

Key Tracks: "Oh Yeah," "Hindsight," "Things Fall Apart"

## Boys Like Girls

★★★★

Love Drunk Columbia

Boston emo poppers dream huge on second disc



THE SECOND ALBUM from these gold-selling Boston guys is as arena-ready as any record you'll hear all year, augmenting Martin Johnson's yearning vocals with gratuitous gloss from hitmaking producers S\*A\*M and Sluggo. *Love Drunk* piles on the heart-baring cheese-outs – "Two Is Better Than One" (with Taylor Swift) sounds like a stripped-down version of a Nineties Aerosmith ballad – and brassy rockers like "Real Thing" crib power chords from Nineties butt-rock bands that these guys are too young to remember firsthand. All this new-Benz shininess would get annoying if it weren't for the sugar-shot melodies.

CHRISTIAN HOARD

Key Tracks: "She's Got a Boyfriend Now," "Real Thing"

## Drummer

★★★★

Feel Good Together

Audio Eagle

Black Keys drummer embraces Nineties nostalgia



WITH DUE RESPECT to Levon Helm, most folks concur that life is far too short for solo albums by rock drummers. So there's clearly some perverse pride in this project, a band composed entirely of moonlighting Ohio-based rock drummers. The most well-known is Patrick Carney of the Black Keys, who plays bass here. But it's the wiry, hyper guitars and weird, snarly keyboards that spark this fatty up. The echoey vocals recall Nineties shoegazers like Ride, and the instrumental breaks suggest quality time has been spent with Pavement's *Slanted and Enchanted*. And that's just fine. Oh, yeah: The drumming kicks some ass.

W.H.

Key Tracks: "Every Nineteen Minutes," "Mature Fantasy"

## Kris Kristofferson

★★★★½

Closer to the Bone New West

Folk-country grandee gathers fans around the campfire



THIS CD DOESN'T come with a campfire, but it might as well. "Here's one I wrote for my kids," says Kris Kristofferson, introducing "From Here to Forever," one of a dozen fine songs on his 15th studio release. As the album title suggests, the scale is intimate – confessions and metaphysical ruminations, delivered in a weathered rumble, punctuated by the sound of harmonica and fingers scrapping on fretboards. Songs like "Starlight and Stone" approach old age (he's 73) with a wry smile and resignation that borders on religiosity: "The road never ends," he sings, "and the soul never dies."

JODY ROSEN

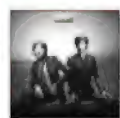
Key Tracks: "Closer to the Bone," "Starlight and Stone"

## Air

★★★★

Love 2 Astralwerks

Fluffy French synth duo beef up their sound



AIR'S ELECTRO-pop generally lives up to the group's name. But their fifth LP sounds a bit, well, polluted. "The world is on the brink... of extinction," intones a fried robot voice on the opener, "Do the Joy," while vintage synths ride a gnarly stoner-rock bass line. Actually, the new dirt and gravitas are refreshing, as is the groove weight of guest drummer Joey Waronker. "Eat My Beat" conjures crisp blaxploitation funk, "Night Hunter" sounds like DJ Shadow channeling Fela Kuti's ghost, and "Love" rocks a kick-in' click track. It's all like a dream of a Seventies soul jam adrift on a space station, wondering when it'll be safe to come home.

W.H.

Key Tracks: "Night Hunter," "Do the Joy," "Love"

## MUSIC TECH

# Zune vs. iPod: Can Microsoft Catch a Break?

## Zune HD ★★★★★ zune.net

**WHAT IT IS** The third generation of Microsoft's attempt to catch up to the iPod, the latest Zune comes in two sizes: 16 gigabytes for \$220, 32 gigs for \$290. After three underwhelming years, the Zune team has gone for broke this time: tying the player into an elaborate, just-short-of-confusing Web service that offers 6 million songs to stream or buy, plus movies, TV shows, social networking and automatic playlists built on your individual tastes.

**WHAT WORKS** It's a sleek, powerful unit that does everything you could ask of an MP3 player, and it has HD radio.

**WHAT DOESN'T** When you get past the checklist of features and cool flourishes, you still have a player that's hard to navigate and lacks the effortless human touch of its main competitor. It's as if the Zune has outfitted itself in a Prada suit but forgotten to take off its pocket protector.



## iPod nano ★★★★★ apple.com

**WHAT IT IS** Apple is hyping the fact that it has added a video camera to its already perfect iPod nano, but that's not the reason to buy it. The company has also cut the price of its top-of-the-line model to \$179 (no change to the 8-gigabyte model). Another addition: a new component for the Genius software, letting you generate genre-by-genre playlists from your music collection on the fly. And there's a pedometer too. A nice feature, but chances are you'll never use it.

**WHAT WORKS** It's a stunningly beautiful object with great hand feel. The designers have rounded the edges and made the screen a mite bigger.

**WHAT DOESN'T** At this point, the tiny low-res video camera is a novelty – fine for goofing around with your friends, as long as you're in broad daylight. But if anyone has earned the right to show off, it's Apple.

WILL DANA





## Wale ★★★

Attention Deficit *Allido/Interscope*

**Heavily hyped rap contender wants fame, hates fakes**



ON HIS 2008 *Mixtape About Nothing*, this D.C. rapper had the guts to set

self-examining rhymes to *Seinfeld* samples. There's nothing so admirably weird on his debut. Wale instead fashions himself Kanye East, a mix of aspiration and anger, given to jazzy moralizing à la the Roots yet not above tapping Lady Gaga for the single "Chillin." "Everybody's on me like the 'A Milli' beat," he boasts while blasting phony stuff like implants and reality shows on "TV in the Radio." The darker moments like "Contemplate," where he explores insecurity against an elegiac Rihanna sample, prove he's better as a doubter, not a hater. **JON DOLAN**

**Key Tracks:** "Contemplate," "Beautiful Bliss"

## Tokio Hotel ★★★

Humanoid *Interscope*

**German pop outfit misplaces its appeal**



WHAT DID BILL Kaulitz do with his charisma? With his over-the-top goth-pop

vocals – and even more baroque hairspray-and-mascara styling – the 20-year-old singer has made this German band one of Europe's most popular and irresistible groups. But on *Humanoid*, he sounds strangely reduced. In part, it's a question of hooks: With the exception of "Hey You" and "World Behind My Wall," the album is melodically anemic and strangely low-key. Subtle is not a mode that suits Kaulitz – just check the coiffure. **J.R.**

**Key Tracks:** "Hey You," "World Behind My Wall"

## Porcupine Tree ★★★

★★★★★

The Incident *Roadrunner*  
**British prog-rockers aim high and deliver big**



"I WAS BORN IN '67/The year of *Sgt. Pepper* and *Are You Experienced?*": Steven

Wilson, singer-founder of this defiantly progressive-rock British band, puts his ideals up front in "Time Flies," the propulsive, grand-jangle heart of *The Incident*. He is as good as his reach. The title suite on this two-CD set is the Tree's finest hour: a mounting drama of memoir and real-news trauma, animated with slicing guitars, ghost-song electronics, mile-high harmonies and smart pop bait. The action is rich in classicism – add King Crimson and early Genesis to Wilson's list of high standards, which all come with renewed life. **DAVID FRICKE**

**Key Tracks:** "Time Flies," "Octane Twisted"

## Various Artists ★★★

★★★★★

The Best Is Yet to Come:  
The Songs of Cy Coleman  
*New West*

**Fiona Apple returns with tribute to old-school writer**



CY COLEMAN WAS among the less-celebrated Great American Songbook writers

when he died in 2004; this tribute by a posse of innovative women – including bluegrass singer Sara Watkins and pop experimenter Ambrosia Parsley – may help remedy that. But Fiona Apple steals the show: Her awesomely sultry "Why Try to Change Me Now" celebrates freakiness in a *Mad Men*-era cocktail dress. We miss you, girlfriend. **W.H.**

**Key Tracks:** "Why Try to Change Me Now," "Too Many Tomorrows"

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# Movies

BY PETER TRAVERS



**TEENAGER IN LOVE** Carey Mulligan (center) turns a schoolgirl crush into an affair with older man Peter Sarsgaard.

## Teach Her Tonight

Lessons in forbidden love from a young actress to remember

### An Education

★★★★½

Carey Mulligan

Directed by Lone Scherfig

SCHOOLGIRL JENNY IS 16 and a virgin. Sophisticated David is twice her age and ready to pounce. The time is 1961. The place is England just before it learned to swing. So begins *An Education*, a quiet miracle of a movie that quickly disabuses you of the idea that you've seen it all before.

Prepare to be wowed by Carey Mulligan, whose sensational, starmaking performance as Jenny ignited film festivals from Sundance to Toronto. The incandescent Mulligan, 24, is a major find who makes Jenny's journey from gawky duckling to sad, graceful swan an unmissable event. As David, Peter Sarsgaard is shockingly good at walking the line between charming opportunist and sexual predator. What's the truth? Pay attention as Danish director Lone Scherfig (*Italian for Beginners*) works wonders with the com-



ing-of-age memoir by British journalist Lynn Barber. This story about a girl is brilliantly adapted by *About a Boy* author Nick Hornby, who finds a timeless resonance in the battle between rigid, formal education and messy, carnal life.

We first meet A-student Jenny struggling to balance a book on her head. It's an apt metaphor for her life. Jenny sneak-smokes, swoons over Juliette Gréco's singing of *tristesse* and dreams of living in Paris with people "who know lots about lots." It's hell on her suburban-London parents, Jack (Alfred Molina) and Marjorie (Cara Seymour), who just want her to go to Oxford and find a

husband. Molina is a comic force of nature, making Jack's warmth a counterweight to his boisterous conservatism.

One rainy day, flirty David pulls up in a sports car, offering to rescue Jenny's cello from the downpour, letting her get soaked walking alongside. The scene is bracingly funny. Jenny is won over, and so eventually is dear old bigoted Dad, who allows the "Jew" to take Jenny on an Oxford weekend to introduce her to his pal Clive—that'd be C.S. Lewis. With the parents seduced, David is ready to move on to Jenny.

*An Education* is remarkable for the traps it doesn't fall into. Jenny, for all her naive impulses, isn't a victim. She thrills to the concerts, jazz clubs and chic restaurants on David's merry-go-round. She doesn't see anything devious in David or his pals, dashing Danny (Dominic Cooper) and blond goddess Helen (Rosamund Pike).

They are everything glamorous that's been out of her reach. At school, Jenny scandalizes the headmistress (an acid-tongued Emma Thompson) and presents David as a viable alternative to Oxford. It's a teacher (Olivia Williams) who pulls her up short: "You can do anything, Jenny, you're clever and pretty. Is your boyfriend interested in the clever Jenny?"

When David sweeps Jenny off to Paris—and bed—for her 17th birthday, there is a rude awakening. Sex is the least of it. As Jenny says, "All that poetry about something that lasts no time at all." In seeing David clearly, she sees herself as well. Mulligan and Sarsgaard craft a mesmerizing acting duet. On Broadway last year in *The Seagull*, Sarsgaard's worldly-wise novelist, Trigorin, enticed Mulligan's aspiring actress, Nina, then left her for dead. Here the odds are evened out. The movie arranges an unsentimental education for both mismatched lovers, and there's no denying the collateral damage. You won't forget Mulligan's haunted eyes. It's a shame about the tidiness of the film's wrap-up, but otherwise *An Education* earns its place at the head of the class.



## Whip It ★★½

Ellen Page, Kristen Wiig  
Directed by Drew Barrymore

AFTER GIVING THE PERFORMANCE of her career in HBO's *Grey Gardens*, Drew Barrymore tackles another killer challenge: directing. The empowerment theme of women's roller derby suits her. Dialing herself back to the supporting role of Smashley Simpson, Barrymore focuses on *Juno* star Ellen Page as a teen Texas BBQ waitress who puts on skates to find her bliss. Bliss is her name, by the way, later changed to Babe Ruthless. Do you sense cutesiness sneaking in? It does, despite skilled actors such as Juliette Lewis as her rival and Kristen Wiig as a fellow Hurl Scout (cute again!). Screenwriter Shauna Cross dulls the edges of her novel *Derby Girl*, which the skate action and rockin' soundtrack can't disguise. At moments, especially in the conflicted intimacy between Marcia Gay Harden and Daniel Stern as Bliss' parents, Barrymore shows real directing chops. But in *Whip It* she's painting inside the box.

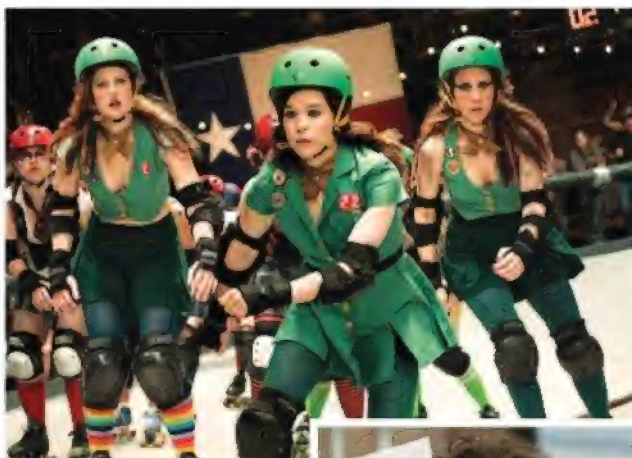
## A Serious Man

★★★★½

Michael Stuhlbarg  
Directed by Joel & Ethan Coen

THE COEN BROTHERS, JOEL and Ethan, are getting personal. They shot their new film in suburban Minnesota, where they grew up as sons of Jewish academics. But if you're expecting something warm and fuzzy, circa 1967, you don't know the Coens, and *A Serious Man* is no country for you. This seriously funny movie, artfully photographed by the great Roger Deakins, is spiritual in nature, barbed in tone, and, oh, yeah, it stings like hell.

Front and center is Larry Gopnik (Michael Stuhlbarg), a physics professor who's getting shit from every side. Unsigned letters to the dean question his ethics and threaten his tenure. His son, Danny (the excellent Aaron Wolff), days away from his bar mitzvah, is lost in a pot daze. His daughter, Sarah (Jessica McManus), is obsessed with getting a nose job. His unemployed brother, Arthur (a wonderfully kinky



**CRISIS POINTS** Clockwise from top: *Whip It*, with Drew Barrymore, Ellen Page and Kristen Wiig (from left); *A Serious Man*, with Michael Stuhlbarg; *Capitalism: A Love Story*, with Michael Moore; *Zombieland*, with Jesse Eisenberg and the undead.

Richard Kind), is crashing on his couch. And his wife, Judith (a pitch-perfect Sari Lennick), is leaving him for slimy, silver-tongued Sy Ableman (Fred Melamed), a serious man.

Larry is being tested like Job, with the Coens playing God and lobbing bolts at him, including a Jew-hating neighbor and a nude lady sunbather who stirs his libido. Larry's divorce lawyer (a deadpan Adam Arkin) warns him to expect the worst. So Larry seeks counsel and comfort from multiple rabbis, who deliver silence or cryptic bromides. Grace Slick, on the radio, gets closer to the point, singing, "When the truth is found to be lies/And all the joy within you dies/Don't you want somebody to love."

Indeed. No doubt the Coens will grin at accusations of stereotyping, self-loathing and box-office suicide. They march to their own mischievous drummer. Larry keeps asking, "Why me?" and stage actor Stuhlbarg, Tony-nominated for *The Pillowman*, is outstanding at showing the humanity that keeps the question urgent. Larry gets the worst of both worlds, sacred and secular. The film starts with a Yiddish-language prologue, set a century ago in Poland, in which a couple open their door to find a needy neighbor who may be a dybbuk (demon) in disguise. Larry is similarly bedeviled. But that sound you hear in this profane spellbinder is the Coens—chuckling in the dark.

## Zombieland ★★½

Woody Harrelson  
Directed by Ruben Fleischer

GUILTY-PLEASURE MOVIES should not be underestimated. I had a scary-fun-house blast at *Zombieland*, in which studly Woody Harrelson, nerdy Jesse Eisenberg, sexy Emma Stone and sunshiny Abigail Breslin roam a near-dead world kicking zombie ass. Director Ruben Fleischer mixes fright and slapstick with bloody glee. And the surprise star cameo is a wowser. Enough said.

## Capitalism: A Love Story ★★½

Directed by Michael Moore

THE PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN have nothing on the buccaneers of Wall Street, and the banks and insurance companies that merrily loot America with the help of our elected officials. You know this. I know this. So how come Michael Moore has to make a movie about it? Because we're doing fuck-all to change things. The explosive *Capitalism: A Love Story* is Moore's call to arms against the robber barons who shamelessly empty our pockets while we do nothing about it. Why? Because we want to get in the pants of the upper one percent and rub up against expensive stuff just like they do. Some love story!

Moore sees our abusive relationship with capitalism as a growing plague. His movie, a genuine and welcome rabble-rouser, lays out the history of how democracy got corrupted. Moore's enemies label him as a fat, fatuous irritant who leans toward the overblown, inflammatory and clownishly silly. What's with those crazy stunts like making a citizen's arrest on the board of AIG or hanging yellow crime-scene tape around the banks? To get our attention, that's what. Moore is a populist, not an academic. He knows how to wield a camera like a blunt instrument. He also knows how to put a human face on statistics as we watch banks foreclose on the homes of families who never read the fine print. Moore's fireball of a movie might even change your life. It had me laughing with tears in my eyes.



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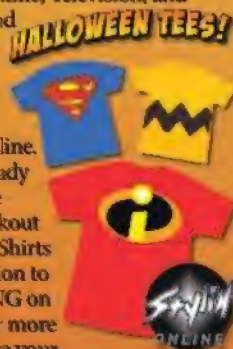
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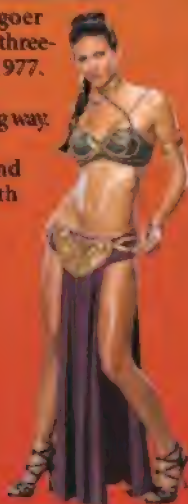
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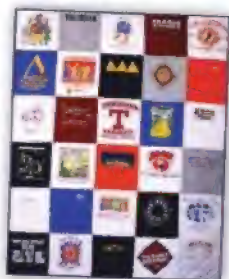
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# CHARTS

## iTUNES TOP 10 TRACKS

- Jay-Z**  
"Empire State of Mind" - Roc-A-Fella
- Drake**  
"Forever" - Young Money/Cash Money/Universal Motown
- Miley Cyrus**  
"Party in the U.S.A." - Hollywood
- Lady Gaga**  
"Paparazzi" - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Jay-Z**  
"Run This Town" - Roc-A-Fella
- Black Eyed Peas**  
"I Gotta Feeling" - Will.i.am/Interscope
- Jason DeRulo**  
"Watcha Say" - Beluga Heights
- Jay Sean**  
"Down" - Cash Money
- Taylor Swift**  
"You Belong With Me" - Big Machine
- Kings of Leon**  
"Use Somebody" - RCA

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## COLLEGE RADIO TOP 10 ALBUMS

- Yo La Tengo**  
Popular Songs - Matador
- Arctic Monkeys**  
Humbug - Domino
- Jay Reatard**  
Watch Me Fall - Matador
- Why?**  
Eskimo Snow - Anticon
- The Fruit Bats**  
The Ruminant Band - Sub Pop
- The Dodos**  
Time to Die - Frenchkiss
- Wild Beasts**  
Two Dancers - Domino
- HEALTH**  
Get Color - Lovepump United
- Blitzen Trapper**  
Black River Killer (EP) - Sub Pop
- Vivian Girls**  
Everything Goes Wrong - In the Red



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## From the Vault

RS 562, October 5th, 1989

### TOP 10 SINGLES

- Janet Jackson**  
"Miss You Much" - A&M
- Madonna**  
"Cherish" - Sire
- Milli Vanilli**  
"Girl I'm Gonna Miss You" - Arista
- Warrant**  
"Heaven" - Columbia
- Cher**  
"If I Could Turn Back Time" - Geffen
- The Rolling Stones**  
"Mixed Emotions" - Rolling Stones
- The Cure**  
"Love Song" - Elektra
- Skid Row**  
"18 & Life" - Atlantic
- Young MC**  
"Bust a Move" - Delicious Vinyl
- Babyface**  
"It's No Crime" - Solar



### On the Cover

"I became a man this year. It's just sort of a feeling. It's nothing to do with teenage spots or sexual problems, really. It's just a feeling. You just eventually wake up and think, 'Oh, yeah, I feel different today.'" [His bandmates laugh.] "I'm not kidding. I'm actually quite serious." —Roland Gift

## Top 40 Albums

- Jay-Z**  
The Blueprint 3 - Roc-A-Fella
- Whitney Houston**  
I Look to You - Arista
- Muse**  
The Resistance - Warner Bros.
- Kid Cudi**  
Man on the Moon: The End of Day - Dream On/G.O.O.D./Universal Motown
- Miley Cyrus**  
The Time of Our Lives (EP) - Hollywood
- Drake**  
So Far Gone (EP) - Young Money/Cash Money/Universal Motown
- Lil Boosie**  
SuperBad: The Return of Boosie Bad Azz - Trill/Asylum
- Taylor Swift**  
Fearless - Big Machine
- Megadeth**  
Endgame - Roadrunner
- Black Eyed Peas**  
The E.N.D. - Will.i.am/Interscope
- Kings of Leon**  
Only by the Night - RCA
- Lady Gaga**  
The Fame - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope
- Zac Brown Band**  
The Foundation - Roar/Bigger Picture/Home Grown/Atlantic
- Trey Songz**  
Ready - Song Book/Atlantic
- Brooks and Dunn**  
#1s... And Then Some - Arista Nashville
- Colbie Caillat**  
Breakthrough - Universal Republic
- Mark Knopfler**  
Get Lucky - Reprise
- Honor Society**  
Fashionably Late - Hollywood
- NOW 31**  
Various Artists - EMI/Universal/Zomba
- Hannah Montana: The Movie**  
Soundtrack - Walt Disney
- Maxwell**  
BLACKsummers'night - Columbia
- Raekwon**  
Only Built 4 Cuban Linx... Pt. II - Ice H2O/EMI
- Jason Aldean**  
Wide Open - Broken Bow
- Daughtry**  
Leave This Town - 19/RCA
- Porcupine Tree**  
The Incident - Roadrunner
- George Strait**  
Twang - MCA Nashville
- Ace Frehley**  
Anomaly - Bronx Born
- Pink**  
Funhouse - LaFace
- Reba McEntire**  
Keep On Loving You - Starstruck
- Boys Like Girls**  
Love Drunk - Columbia
- Eminem**  
Relapse - Web/Shady/Aftermath/Interscope
- NOW That's What I Call Country Volume 2**  
Various Artists - EMI/Universal
- Nickelback**  
Dark Horse - Roadrunner
- Trick Daddy**  
Finally Famous: Born a Thug, Still a Thug - Dunk Ryder
- Shadows Fall**  
Retribution - Everback Industries/Ferret
- Pitbull**  
Rebution - Mr. 305/Polo Grounds/J
- Skillet**  
Awake - Ardent/INO/Atlantic
- Uncle Kracker**  
Happy Hour - Top Dog/Atlantic/AG
- Nelly Furtado**  
Mi Plan - Nelstar/Universal Music Latino
- Beyoncé**  
I Am... Sasha Fierce - Music World/Columbia



### Blueprint for a Hit

Performances on the VMAs and *The Jay Leno Show* helped Jay-Z sell 774,001 copies of the hit-packed *The Blueprint 3* in its first two weeks.



### The Kid's All Right

Ohio rapper Kid Cudi's debut LP - which features Kanye and MGMT, plus the radio smash "Day 'N' Nite" - sold 103,903 copies its first week on shelves.



### The Sultan Swings

Knopfler's sixth solo set is a mellow effort with a Celtic vibe. It moved 22,600 units its first week - nearly the same amount his 2007 LP sold.



### Spaceman Returns

Original Kiss guitarist Frehley spent 20 years chipping away at this solo disc, which features a cover of Sweet's 1975 hit "Fox on the Run."

00 Chart position on Sept. 23rd, 2009  
00 Chart position on Sept. 16th, 2009  
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